

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The Jesuit Educational
Center for Human Development

PROCESSED

APR 03 1996

GTU LIBRARY

Taking a Sexual History

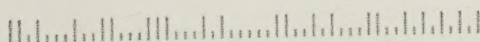
Women's Congregational Leadership

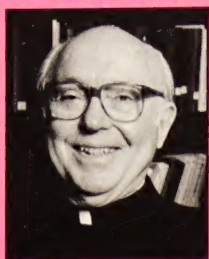
Mentoring Improves Vocation Promotion

The Essentials of Formative Ministry

A Response to Catastrophe

*****3-DIGIT 947
P 11096SS WINTER 96 340 1-
GRAD THEOL UNION/LIBR SERIALS
2400 RIDGE RD
BERKELEY CA 94709-1212

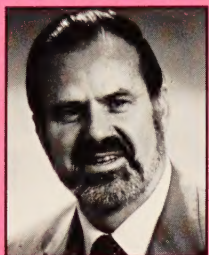




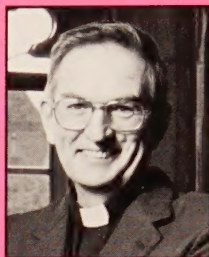
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF James J. Gill, S.J., M.D., a priest and psychiatrist, serves as a consultant to the Institute of Living, the Harvard University Health Services, and religious congregations, dioceses, formation personnel, and spiritual renewal centers throughout the world.



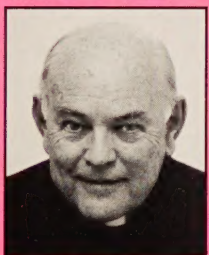
EXECUTIVE EDITOR Linda Amadeo, R.N., M.S., a nurse whose clinical specialty is psychiatry, is assistant director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality in Boston, Massachusetts. She conducts workshops internationally on topics related to human development and women's issues.



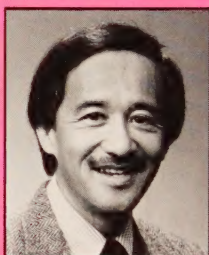
SENIOR EDITOR Loughlan Sofield, S.T., M.A., is a member of the staff of the Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality in Boston, Massachusetts. Brother Loughlan has conducted workshops on psychology and ministry in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Africa, Asia, and India.



SENIOR EDITOR William A. Barry, S.J., Ph.D., a priest, author, spiritual director, and lecturer, is the provincial of the Society of Jesus of New England. In the past Father Barry has been vice-provincial for formation in the New England province, rector of the Jesuit community at Boston College, and director of the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



BOOK REVIEW EDITOR Jon J. O'Brien, S.J., D.O., is a priest, lawyer, and physician, board-certified in psychiatry. He is staff psychiatrist at the North American College, Vatican City, and clinical associate professor of psychiatry at Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, D.C.



ASSOCIATE EDITOR Wilkie Au, Ph.D., is director of spiritual development services in the Los Angeles Archdiocese and adjunct professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University. A consultant to the United States Navy and Marine Chaplain Corps, he is a member of an ecumenical team of professionals providing spiritual development training for chaplains within the United States and overseas.

The quarterly journal HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (ISSN 0197-3096) is published by the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development (JECHD), St. John's Seminary, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898. The JECHD is a nonprofit organization established to be of service to persons involved in religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, pastoral care, and education. Subscription rate: United States and Canada, \$24.00; all other countries, \$31.00. Single copies: United States and Canada, \$8.00 plus shipping; all other countries, \$10.00 plus shipping. Second-class postage paid in Boston, MA, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send 3579 to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, P.O. Box 3000, Dept. HD, Denville, NJ 07834. Copyright 1996 by HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Send new subscriptions, renewals, and change of address (please include mailing label if available) to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, P.O. Box 3000, Dept. HD, Denville, NJ 07834.

Letters to the editor and all other correspondence may be sent to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, St. John's Seminary, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898. Phone: (617) 562-0766. Fax: (617) 562-0668.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

5

A SCIENCE FOR LEADERSHIP IN WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS

Helen Maher Garvey, B.V.M., Ed.D.

10

TAKING A SEXUAL HISTORY

Gerald D. Coleman, S.S.

16

DUAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THERAPY

Janet Malone, C.N.D., Ed.D.

20

THE COURAGE TO BE

James Torrens, S.J.

22

THE ESSENTIALS OF FORMATIVE MINISTRY

Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.

27

MENTORING IMPROVES VOCATION PROMOTION

Stephen W. Synan, F.M.S., Ph.D.

33

IMAGINED SPACES HELPFUL TO A HEALING

Patricia Chaffee, O.P.

36

BEDROCK ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Patrick J. McDonald, L.S.W.

41

WESTERN INFLUENCE ON SOUTHEAST ASIAN FORMATION

Mark Fortner, S.C.J., Ph.D.

44

A RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHE

Reverend William B. Ross, S.T.L.

48

SENIOR LAYPERSONS ENRICH A RECTORY

Reverend Roger L. Prokop, Ph.D.

2

EDITORIAL BOARD

3

EDITOR'S PAGE

Star Athletes Exhibit Spirituality

EDITORIAL BOARD

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JAMES J. GILL, S.J., M.D.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

LINDA D. AMADEO, R.N., M.S.

SENIOR EDITOR

LOUGHLAN SOFIELD, S.T., M.A.

SENIOR EDITOR

WILLIAM A. BARRY, S.J., Ph.D.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

WILKIE AU, Ph.D.

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

JON O'BRIEN, S.J., D.O.

MANAGING EDITOR

CAROL LEACH

MARKETING DIRECTOR

CATHERINE S. FARIA

Reverend Gerald A. Arbuckle, S.M.
Reverend George Aschenbrenner, S.J.
Reverend Robert Y. Blyman, M.D.
Reverend Michael J. Buckley, S.J.
Sister Noreen D. Cannon, C.S.J.
Reverend David Coghlan, S.J.
Reverend William J. Connolly, S.J.
Sister Marian Cowan, C.S.J.
Most Reverend John Cummins, D.D.
Reverend Angelo D'Agostino, S.J., M.D.
Reverend Joseph Dargan, S.J.
Sister Anita de Luna, M.C.D.P.
Meyer Friedman, M.D.
Reverend John Carroll Futrell, S.J.
Brother Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.
Reverend Howard Gray, S.J.
Rabbi Earl Grollman
Sister Brenda L. Hermann, M.S.B.T.
Daniel E. Jennings, D.S.W.
Most Reverend James Keleher, D.D.
Reverend Edward Malatesta, S.J.
Sister Donna J. Markham, O.P.
His Eminence Carlo Cardinal Martini, S.J.
Reverend Dominic Maruca, S.J.
Heidi McCloskey, R.N., M.S.N.
Reverend Cecil McGarry, S.J.
Reverend Paul Molinari, S.J.
Sister Joanne Moore, C.H.M.
John R. Moran, Jr., J.D.
Reverend John O'Callaghan, S.J.
Reverend Edward M. O'Flaherty, S.J.
Reverend Timothy Quinlan, S.J.
Brother Charles Reutemann, F.S.C.
Reverend Gordon Tavis, O.S.B.
Robert J. Wicks, Psy.D.
Brother James R. Zullo, F.S.C.

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

The editors are pleased to consider for publication articles relating to the ongoing work of those involved in helping other people through religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, and counseling.

Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the Executive Editor, Linda Amadeo, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, St. John's Seminary, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898. Copy should be typewritten double-spaced on $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ -inch white paper, 70 characters per line and 28 lines per page. Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 pages) with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black and white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews, which should not exceed 600 words in length, should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Jon O'Brien, S.J., D.O., c/o HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (for address, see above).

Unaccepted manuscripts will not be returned unless requested and submitted with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Editorial Office: phone (617) 562-0766; fax (617) 562-0668.

EDITOR'S PAGE

STAR ATHLETES EXHIBIT SPIRITUALITY

Professional athletes do more than play games and sell sporting goods these days. Their actions on and off the court, diamond, and gridiron provide more than just entertainment for enthusiastic fans. They are teaching all of us—especially the young among us—how we all ought to live our everyday lives.

On the front page of the *Boston Globe* newspaper last month, readers saw a large photo of members of the Dallas Cowboys football team kneeling in prayer at the edge of the playing field moments before the kickoff of the National Football Conference championship game. Two weeks later, television spectators all over the world watched players on both the winning and losing teams at the Super Bowl come together, join hands, and pray right after the game. These tens of millions of viewers had, minutes earlier, seen the Pittsburgh Steelers' "Bam" Morris run for a touchdown, then drop to one knee and bow his head prayerfully before he turned to receive the joyous embraces of his teammates.

In each of these situations, life was lived, work and play undertaken, and victory or loss experienced with the players strikingly aware of their personal, thriving relationship with an ever-present and highly involved God.

Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Fred Barnett recently told a sports writer, "I work hard at football, but as a Christian, the reason I'm here is not to be an all-pro or catch as many balls as I can. I'm here to be a witness of who God is and what he can do. Everything else is secondary."

During a nationally televised postgame interview, Jim Harbaugh, the outstanding quarterback playing for the Indianapolis Colts, began his comments on the close and exciting contest by stating, "First of all, I would like to give all praise and glory to the Lord our God and our savior Jesus Christ."

College athletes, too, are becoming more open in their game-time expressions of religious faith. For example, last spring, immediately after winning the national collegiate basketball championship, the whole team from the University of California at Los Angeles knelt on the court while assistant coach Lorenzo Romar prayed, "Father, we've gone with you all year. We've played for you, and you have been first."

At present, virtually every professional football, baseball, and basketball team in the United States employs at least one chaplain who regularly conducts worship services and often leads sessions devoted to study of the Bible. High school and college athletes are increasingly attending faith-focused talks given by stars and coaches outstanding in tennis, golf, swimming, and track. A single organization, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (based in Kansas City, Missouri), currently includes 250,000 students playing on teams at 5,600 secondary schools and universities nationwide.

What is remarkable about the televised witness to faith that so many professional athletes are displaying on the playing field is the fact that they are publicly and unmistakably demonstrating their belief in God's dynamic presence—and also their understanding that their bodies and minds, talents and opportunities, accomplishments and fulfillments are all gifts ultimately coming to them from the loving and creative hand of God. Their acts of observable piety, shown to us at dramatic moments of desire, triumph, gratitude, and grief, raise challenging questions about professionals in other fields and especially about their work lives. Do surgeons drop to their knees after a successful operation? Do lawyers bow their heads in prayer before stepping into the courtroom? Do winning and losing competitors in the corporate world link hands and praise God together when a huge government contract is awarded? Do opera stars give the applauding audience some sign that their magnificent performance has been inspired and made possible by God? Do passengers hear pilots give praise to the Creator for the success of the flight and the

amazing technology of the aircraft? I would imagine that such things do occur at some times—but probably not often enough. By that I mean not often enough to teach young women and men striving to become physicians, lawyers, engineers, entertainers, teachers, or anything else that they should be living all their days with a habitual awareness of God's presence and a consciousness of the fact that what they are and all they accomplish ought to be spontaneously, humbly, and gratefully credited to God.

Many professional and nonprofessional athletes are already living this way. What can the rest of us do to enhance the piety operative in our own work lives

and in those of the young and the not-so-young? We can't all drop to our knees after scoring a touchdown or make the sign of the cross after winning a medal at the Olympic Games, but surely we can discover equivalent opportunities to proclaim our faith and gratitude to God, if we put our minds and hearts to the task.



James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Human Sexuality Program

Is there someone in your seminary, religious congregation, diocese, parish, institution, or organization whose ministry would be improved through an increased understanding of human sexuality? If so, tell them about

The Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality

For information about the institute, please see the back cover of this issue.

A Science for Leadership in Women's Congregations

Helen Maher Garvey, B.V.M., Ed.D.

On a cold, dark, dangerously icy night in the late 1980s, I landed at National Airport in Washington, D.C., for a meeting. Clutching my purse, I retrieved my suitcase and struggled to the waiting room in order to board the van that would take me to my destination—Silver Spring, Maryland. The waiting room, featuring abandoned newspapers, half-empty coffee containers, and weary travelers, did not portend a future full of hope. I approached the agent, Michelle, several times. Each time I asked a question, I was rebuffed. Any inquiries about the departure of a van for Silver Spring seemed to be an interruption of a busy schedule that did not include time for me.

Later, when I was ensconced in a van precariously making its way through the slippery, crowded Washington streets, Michelle's voice followed me. Using an intercom radio, she issued harsh commands to our driver, Elizabeth, throughout the journey. Shouts of, "Hurry up! Watch out! Be quiet! Get the money!" echoed through the vehicle. Elizabeth listened patiently. Finally, when all the other passengers had disembarked and I was alone with Elizabeth, I asked her, "Do you want to talk about Michelle?"

"Michelle?" responded Elizabeth. "I don't let her cut into my energy."

"I don't let her cut into my energy": that comment resounds in my mind and heart as I reflect on our current attitudes about religious life. What is cutting into our energy? What is causing us to question our future? Where are we hurrying? For what are we watching? Who is telling us to be quiet? How much money do we need? Who is this Michelle, anyway?

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Over the past several years, experts on religious life have advised us to refound, redescribe, restructure, reimagine, reform, and revitalize religious life. Television stories, newspaper clippings, and the shaking voices answering our motherhouse switchboards remind us that we are indeed aging. Our profession ceremonies often feature a lonely candidate, perilously close to our own ages, pronouncing vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. A person in formation ministry recently described vocation work as "the condition of being in an absolute state of readiness for people who are not coming."

In addition to this cheerful situation, studies tell us that we are unclear about our role. When we are developing our budgets, or evaluating the chief administrative officer of our hospitals, or trying to make a decision about a wild request for the use of patri-

mony funds, we may long for a nice hazy role description with few responsibilities for choice. We may think that our role is only too clear. Nevertheless, an unclear role description adds to the list of difficulties confronting religious life, each congregation, and each religious in our time. Cumulatively, these realities present the genuine possibility of cutting into our energy in ways that threaten to squander the rich, mysterious, overwhelming, powerful, precious, essential, holy mission of religious life.

To minimize these challenges is to deny the real anxieties of good and faithful women in the midst of catastrophic change. To minimize these challenges is to walk cavalierly over the lives of saints who have borne the heat of the day—who entered the world of Vatican II with eager minds and generous hearts, who labored to bring forth a new life seemingly promised to them during the early, heady days of renewal. To minimize these challenges is to refuse reality, to contradict all that solid psychology teaches about denial and death.

And so we scrutinize religious life as it is now—without the balloons and guitars of the seventies; within the ubiquitous setting of large-group, small-group, and no-group discussions of the eighties; in the serious environment of the nineties. We do not flinch from reality or from its pain and grief. In an essay on contemporary religious life, Sandra Schneiders describes a malaise, a darkness, evidenced among women religious. Just a week ago, I received a letter from a normally optimistic, joyous religious, telling me she was experiencing unaccountable sadness. These are not isolated events.

OBJECTIVITY ESSENTIAL

Chastened by a long and sometimes disappointing journey into renewal, we know that we cannot go around the present state of religious life; we must go through it. We must see it as it is. We must be as objective as scientists.

What does it mean to be scientific? What is the new science? The insights of the new science are not ideas that wake you each morning; they are not usually delineated in the thousands of articles on the future of religious life. We are seldom requested to share our secret thoughts about the connection between science and religion. How many times, in meetings of religious, have we been asked to get into small groups and discuss the new science? Nevertheless, insights from the world of science influence us every day; they shape our thoughts, our language, our vision.

Several years ago, I attended the Neylan Conference—a gathering of representatives of colleges, sponsored by congregations of women religious. One

of the sisters in the audience declared, in response to a presentation, that “the strongest certainty in science today is uncertainty, mystery.” That statement sounded interesting and provocative but unrelated to my life of administration in a religious congregation. Years later, upon reflection, it reminds me of a remark my mother often applied to me: “You have been educated beyond your intelligence.” I did not get it.

Many compelling ideas are originating in the new science. In *Leadership and the New Science*, Margaret Wheatley points out that some of those concepts relate to religious life and to religious leaders:

- Organisms and organizations are wholes; the focus must be on the whole, not on the parts.
- The connection between parts—the relationship—is as important as the parts themselves; the *and* is essential.
- The universe is more like a giant thought than like a giant machine.
- Chaos leads to order.

THE NEW SCIENCE

Principle 1: Organisms are wholes. How many times during our conversations about feminism have we invoked this concept? How many times have we decried the fact that a woman who is a hospital chaplain cannot minister sacramentally to a dying patient because an ordained man is necessary? How many times have knots formed in our stomachs as we discussed the impending arrival of an ordained minister at the end of a day of community dialogue? We are torn between the good manners taught to us so diligently by our mothers and our novice mistresses and the truth that life is whole and cannot be divided into unrelated parts.

As women yearning for wholeness, we are divided by our devotion to the ancient wisdom of our church and the new justice of Christian feminism. How well Elizabeth Johnson describes fragmentation when she declares simply, “Symbols function.” Writing eloquently in *Commonweal* (January 1993), on the subject of inclusive language, Johnson asserts that the absence of feminine words from civil and church language is a symbol that functions: it functions to erase the image of women and thereby presents an impoverished, partial image of God.

No wonder there is malaise. Our intuition and our intelligence desire wholeness, harmony, completion. On certain days the struggle seems lost. But examine the reality. Could we even imagine this particular conflict twenty years ago? Did we know the word *inclusive*? Did we foresee any value in challenging our

mothers' creed of courtesy or our novice mistresses' instruction on respect for the clergy? What a privilege it is to be living at this time, through this venture, with these companions. We in religious life have the rare luxury of searching beyond the daily routine for possibilities of wholeness while many of our sisters and brothers expend all their energy in the effort to survive. Our goals are fragmented, our symbols incomplete, but we groan for the possibility of wholeness.

Principle 2: The connection between parts is as important as the parts themselves. Basically related to the principle of wholeness is the conviction that the connection between parts is as important as the parts themselves; the *and* is essential. Think of all the *ands* in religious life that may be troubling and/or challenging: the congregation and justice, and the environment, and the Vatican, and a particular sister, and a given health care facility—relationships, relationships, relationships.

Over the past several years, religious congregations have embraced the primacy of relationships. Yet economic and professional forces propel us into wild surges of planning—planning sometimes separate from connections. Planning can either nourish relationships or stifle them.

When the plans of ten committees lie dead at your feet, a mass of charts and graphs, unimplemented and unmourned—or when the plans developed by ten committees permeate the life of the organization, furthering its mission—you seek a reason for the differing results. Could it be that the successful plan not only attended to vision, goals, objectives, and action steps but also considered connections? The successful planners may have sought collaboration, linkages, the practical abilities of particular groups or persons to work with one another.

While relationships are essential to our corporate life, they are the very heart of human life, Christian life, religious life. In fact, there is no separation from the web that so lightly yet so strongly binds us together. When I think of relationships in my own religious life, I remember the nuns who, in my first week of teaching, tore down my version of a bulletin board for the sixth grade and put up something presentable. I remember coming home from a lecture in the mid-seventies and sitting in the community room early into the morning, discussing renewal with my peers. I remember the death of the leaders who inspired our congregation. I remember Helen Flaherty, S.C., holding down the crowd during a national meeting of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in Baltimore, right after “Essential Elements” had been promulgated. I remember the faces. I cherish the relationships.

In *God for Us: The Trinity in Christian Life*, Catherine LaCugna reminds us that an isolated person is a contradiction in terms. Religious life in the nineties is not a contradiction in terms; it is a convergence of the human and divine desires for communion. The person who possesses the capacity for communion finds a breadth and depth of relationships in religious life.

Principle 3: The universe is more like a giant thought than like a giant machine. Most of our ideas about the universe or the earth are based on the old concept that the universe is a giant machine. What do machines do? They use materials; make products; produce results based on specific causes. Machines are efficient.

What do thoughts do? They digest information; develop ideas; communicate with ideas of the past and present; provide tension with other, dissimilar thoughts; offer the possibility of synthesis. Thoughts are developmental and evolutionary.

Think for a minute. Was your novitiate more like a machine or more like a thought? How about the process of ongoing renewal? How about contemplation? This exercise does not deny the importance of machines or old scientific concepts. It is a question of discovering the major paradigm of creation. Our unconscious acceptance of a particular paradigm determines our attitude toward life and our choices.

Has our paradigm separated us from the earth community or included us in it? How have processes, engaging small and large groups in thought and discussion, forwarded the mission of our congregation? One thing I have learned over many years of sharing is that process demands purpose. Process is enriched by the prior presentation of stimulating thought or trivialized by the absence of any preparation but putting chairs in a circle. When nice, easygoing, cooperative nuns with vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience refuse to get into small groups, you know you have failed somewhere.

The concept of the universe as a giant thought challenges us as it challenges scientists. It is not a complete theory that is understood and incorporated into our everyday speech, like the theories of Erik Erikson, which have given the mainstream language of our culture such terms as *identity crisis*. Yet the universe as a giant thought is thinking and affecting our thought—for we humans, we religious, are part of the universe, part of the earth. The process of relating, praying, and planning fostered by most religious congregations strives to replicate giant thought.

Principle 4: Chaos leads to order. Here is a very simplistic description of chaos theory: Growth in

information leads to disturbance in an organism. If a system is dislodged from its stable state, it moves first into a period of oscillation, swinging back and forth between two different states. If it moves out of this oscillation, it moves into a period of full chaos—a state of total unpredictability. But in the realm of chaos, where everything should fall apart, the “strange attractor” comes into play. A strange attractor is a basin of attraction, an area to which the system is drawn magnetically. Scientists can now observe movements that, though random and unpredictable, never exceed boundaries. Chaos is order without predictability. The system will eventually reconfigure itself at a higher level of complexity—one better able to deal with the new environment.

I remember that in the late sixties, young sisters returned from studies and raised the possibility that sitting at the table according to age negated personalism, or that marching to church in ranks obscured freedom, or that Adam and Eve never were. This information caused a disturbance in the organism. There were periods of oscillation.

It is difficult to distinguish between the state of oscillation and the state of chaos, but both states did prevail during the late sixties and into the seventies. Certainly, random and unpredictable events occurred in society and in religious life. But then the strange attractor comes into play—that basin of attraction magnetically captivating the system, never letting it exceed its boundaries, preserving order.

What was the strange attractor that brought most religious communities together after a period of turmoil? What was it that prevented religious communities from exceeding their boundaries, that created some order in the midst of unpredictability? Was it the charism of the congregation—that gift of the Spirit, given for the whole church? Was it “the love of God poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us” (Rom. 5:5)? Was it the precious gift of religious life itself, so embedded in our personal and communal hearts that we could not abandon it?

MYSTERY, GRACE, AND GOD

What is the strange attractor today that brings religious together—locally, nationally, internationally—to relate, to pray, to create? What fuels our passion for justice? What fires our desire for God? What compels our belief in a future rising from the ashes of a thousand institutional closings, tens of thousands of withdrawals from religious life, countless refusals of inclusion in ecclesial circles? Why are we faithful?

The image of Jackie Robinson sliding safely into home plate haunts me. The Public Broadcasting Service series *Baseball* recounted the story of Robinson’s

entry into the major leagues, the brutal personal abuse, the death threats, the untouchable dignity of the man. A week before his death, Robinson spoke to a capacity crowd in a baseball stadium wreathed in tradition. He talked about the long road ahead, the fact that racism still dominated United States culture. He called for the full participation of blacks in American life. Clothed with honor yet physically bent by the forces of evil, acknowledging the thunderous cheers of the crowd, Robinson had not let anyone cut into his energy. He was faithful to his mission.

When he died, many newspapers carried a photo of Robinson sliding into home plate. Here was energy, daring, risk; here was discipline, hope, desire; here was a uniform soiled with many violent crashings into the ground; here was Jackie’s leg, outstretched to meet home plate; here was a big catcher’s mitt, threatening Jackie’s contact with that plate; here, off to the side, were his teammates, at last welcoming him home. Jackie was safe at home. He had been faithful to his mission; he had not let anyone cut into his ultimate energy, the power that defined his life.

It would be simplistic to describe our lives simply in terms of a heroic man who fought for justice on and off the baseball field. Religious life is not as well understood as baseball. But we do have a mission that carries us home. Our mission possesses us definitively but mysteriously. We do enjoy relationships—which, although strained at times, ultimately cheer us on, welcome us home, are there for us and with us. We are the beneficiaries of a tradition of grace originating before the time of Jesus, in the religious life histories of the Hindus and the Buddhists.

How do we respond to all that cuts into the energy of religious life here and now, in the time of the Synod on Religious Life? How do we leaders in religious life slide safely home in the midst of internal conflict, unanswered mail, and fanatical demands from the Left and Right? How do we hope in a life seemingly diminished by the ravages of obsolescence?

Let nothing cut into our energy. Let us be as objective as are scientists in their deep understanding of the chaos of the universe. The magnetism of the strange attractor compels us. The strange attractor is mystery; it is grace; it is God. Where are mystery, grace, and God in religious life today? God is all around us and within us, in history, in relationships, in prophetic witness.

EVIDENCE OF GOD

The history of religious life did not begin in the so-called golden age of religious life, the 1950s, when novitiates were full and when Catholic elementary

schools were staffed by cadres of nuns bolstered by the unshakable principles of grammar, as set forth by *Voyages in English*. The fifties in the United States were not the norm for religious life.

Religious life has its origin in the monasteries of the Hindus and Muslims. Our sense of history, especially in this new country, is based on a fleeting memory of a world that never really existed. The real chronicle of religious life is the story of women and men responding to an ancient, haunting, mysterious call—a call growing and changing, rising and falling throughout recorded history—a call that echoes in our own time, in our own hearts.

Today we treasure relationships unimaginable when we entered religious life at age 18 or 25 or 35. Some of these relationships have been rocky or impossible, but the whole of our lives creates a priceless opportunity for our growth as human beings and as communities.

Together with relationships and history, God is present in prophetic witness. Where to begin to describe the prophetic witness of religious life? Do I begin with the immediate knowledge that the sister with whom I live is now traveling the state of Iowa for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious to determine the greatest needs of the poorest among Iowa's rural counties, so that Iowa women religious can establish an intercongregational mission? Do I begin by telling you about a grant proposal I read two weeks ago—written by a woman religious—to open a residence for women with Hansen's disease in Ecuador? Who can paint the picture of the prophetic witness of religious life in our time?

CHALLENGE OF MEANING

There is meaning in religious life, meaning in its history, meaning in its relationships, meaning in its prophetic witness. And what do religious leaders have to do with meaning? Everything! The articulation of meaning is the ultimate role of leadership. When all is said and done, when all the studies have been analyzed, when all the constitutions have been printed, there is still just one preeminent work of leadership. The ministry of leadership is to hold up meaning—to describe it, to repeat it, to embody it.

The leadership of the media make their meaning absolutely clear; the media describe, repeat, and embody materialism, sexism, and violence. How do leaders of religious congregations of women make *our* meaning absolutely clear? Our women have died for

meaning, and they will continue to do so if the meaning of their lives is lifted up, honored, sacralized. A congregational leader told me that her women had lived joyously on mud floors in foreign lands, but some of them, after returning to the United States, complained bitterly about comfortable conditions in modern retirement facilities in California. What was the difference? I submit that it was meaning. For whatever reasons, these sisters did not discover meaning in their restful experience of retirement.

For those who bear the grace of leadership, the challenge of meaning is primary. Certainly, the buildings must be tuckpointed; certainly, the benefactors must be thanked; certainly, the budget must be developed. But maintenance tasks can evidence meaning. Communication with the sisters holds the possibility of cherishing the meaning of all that they are and all that they do. In the midst of a busy, conflictual, cynical environment, our sisters need to hear again and again that their lives personify meaning. These lives invite reverence—not the codified privileges of a bygone era but the credible realization of a genuine worth, of immortal value.

Oh, yes, there is individualism; there is the magnetism of the therapeutic; there is conflict among us, with our brother-in-law, and with the institutional church. But let not these sufferings, let not these distractions, let not this cross cut into our energy. Turn off your intercom, Michelle; listen to Elizabeth. There is ultimate meaning in our life.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Johnson, E. "A Theological Case for God/She." *Commonweal*, 29 January 1993.
- LaCugna, C. *God for Us: The Trinity in Christian Life*. San Francisco, California: Harper, 1991.
- Schneiders, S. "Contemporary Religious Life: Death or Transformation?" In *Religious Life*, ed. by C. Yuhaus. New York, New York: Paulist Press, 1994.
- Wheatley, M. *Leadership and the New Science*. San Francisco, California: Berrett-Koehler, 1992.



Sister Helen Maher Garvey, B.V.M., Ed.D., is director of pastoral services for the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. She serves as a member of the board of trustees at Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois.

Taking a Sexual History

Gerald D. Coleman, S.S.

The fourth edition of the National Council of Catholic Bishops' *Program of Priestly Formation* stresses the need for proper preparation in sexuality for seminarians:

Seminarians should understand the connection between mature love and celibacy. In doing so, the insights of modern psychology can be a considerable aid. The goal of psychological, social and spiritual development should be to form seminarians into chaste celibate men who are loving pastors of the people they serve.

In Pope John Paul II's postsynodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis (I Will Give You Shepherds)*, the same need for education in sexuality is expressed:

Education for responsible love and affective maturity of the person are totally necessary for those who, like the priest, are called to celibacy. . . . In the seminary . . . celibacy should be presented clearly, without any ambiguities and in a positive fashion.

One important way of fostering a proper understanding and awareness of the candidate's psychosexual maturity is by taking a sexual/affective history. In an article entitled "Some Red Flags for Child Sexual Abuse" (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, Winter 1994),

Stephen J. Rossetti rightly argues that "the need of the church and the demands of ministry today necessitate this history taking."

The purpose of a sexual/affective history is threefold: to assist a seminarian in better understanding and evaluating the history of his sexual life; to help the seminary form a balanced and healthy seminarian; and to assist the church in ordaining priests who are sexually balanced and integrated. Official church documents convincingly argue the following points:

Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestations, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. (*Educational Guidance in Human Love*, Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983)

Sexuality is an important element of the human personality, an integral part of one's overall consciousness. It is both a central aspect of one's self-understanding . . . and a crucial factor in one's relationship with others. (*Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics in the United States*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1977)

Sexuality is a dimension of one's restless heart, which continually yearns for interpersonal communion, glimpsed and experienced to varying degrees in this life, ultimately finding full oneness only in God. (*Human*

Consequently, the purpose of taking a sexual history in the context of seminary formation is to provide the optimum possibility for the affective/sexual integration of candidates as a means to enhance sensitivity, understanding, intimacy, openness to others, and compassion—all leading to the possibility of living an authentic life of chaste celibacy.

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

In the book *When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches*, Australian authors Neil and Thea Ormerod address the specific question and problems surrounding their topic. Although the book focuses on sexual abuse by ministers of religion, it also raises critical questions about sexuality in general and specifically points to the necessity of adequate formation in sexuality for those preparing to enter ordained ministry in the churches. *When Ministers Sin* and other books like it clearly indicate that the priestly role automatically carries great spiritual and social power—and that one destructive way of misusing that power is engaging in inappropriate sexual behavior.

In the public perception, priests sustain higher ethical standards than people in secular professions, even though recent examples demonstrate that this assumption is not necessarily well founded. In most cases priests have few structures for professional accountability—and often no clear code of professional ethics. This lack makes it difficult for priests to define sexual boundaries and to be held accountable for violating them.

The problem is not unique to Catholic priests. *When Ministers Sin* cites a document adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), which states that “statistical evidence suggests between 10 and 23 percent of clergy nationwide have engaged in sexualized behavior or sexual contact with parishioners, clients, employees, etc.” When the research department of the journal *Christianity Today* surveyed evangelical ministers on the topic, 23 percent of the respondents answered yes to “Since you’ve been in local church ministry have you ever done anything with someone . . . that you feel was sexually inappropriate?” It is clearly evident that many ministers behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

In the Catholic church there is a critical interaction of the issues of sexuality and celibacy. The church requires celibacy of its priests, and this “imposition” can invoke considerable sympathy from many people. For example, some people feel sorry for priests

because of the “burden” of celibacy and thus make excuses for sexual “indiscretions.”

Some priests sustain an honest struggle with celibacy and have never gone through the necessary mourning in accepting a celibate lifestyle. We live in a culture that glorifies sex and sexuality, and this fact makes celibacy difficult to maintain. In *When Ministers Sin*, the Ormerods comment:

Clearly seminary formation in celibacy is essential for the prospective priest to be able to come to a responsible decision about his future. Moreover Catholic church authorities and communities have a right to expect that those who enter ministry will behave in a responsible manner with regard to their vow of celibacy. . . . If a priest finds he can no longer live in a celibate manner he must also act responsibly and question his ongoing commitment to ministry.

Clearly, priests must act responsibly within the structures that exist and to which they have freely committed themselves. The alternative is self-deception, public damage to the church, and possibly sexual abuse. When priests find themselves separating their private and public roles, they are already treading on dangerous ground.

Priests can easily fall into certain rationalizations to justify sexual impropriety:

We have a need for intimacy. Such a claim contains a half-truth: the full development of one’s personality necessitates forming intimate relationships with other persons. There is no need, however, to achieve this through sexualized behavior.

This is how I show affection. Some priests use such an assertion to justify sexual expression: “I am doing the other person a favor.” This is a dramatic form of self-deception.

It’s not sexual unless it’s genital. Some priests justify sexual impropriety by pretending that as long as they refrain from engaging in genital sex, all other forms of sexualized behavior are justified. Such inappropriate behavior sends out certain messages (e.g., the priest is not truly committed to celibacy; he assumes that the other person is not truly affected by his behavior).

Women throw themselves at priests. This deception makes the other person the guilty party. When a priest is not aware of his own sexuality and psychosexual processes, such projection is a real danger. It is very easy for sexually insecure people to project their own sexual desires onto others.

Certain perspectives are important. First, priests are not asexual beings. They need to be aware of themselves as persons with sexual feelings and needs, and they need to act with personal and professional responsibility. They do grave injustice to others when they betray essential trust; they inflict incalculable

moral, spiritual, psychological, and at times even physical damage.

Second, the priest who sexualizes his behavior abuses those in his care and injures the heart of the Christian message; he becomes a countersign of the Kingdom. Rather than being an *alter Christus*, he becomes an *anti Christus*.

Third, the failure of some priests to uphold the sexual moral standards of the Catholic tradition is a serious problem that should not be ignored or played down. The church loses credibility when priests display dysfunctional behavior in the area of sexuality. The public cry of hypocrisy is raised, and this cry brings the church into disrepute. This problem should not be dismissed through such arguments as "we are all sinners" or "the media is unfavorable to the church."

It is critical, then, that seminaries do everything possible to prepare candidates for the priesthood in the area of sexuality. There are no foolproof measures to assure a life free of sexual tensions and temptations. No life is free of these; each of us must learn how to deal with them. Seminaries must do everything possible to prepare the church's future spiritual leaders for balanced, adult recognition of their own sexuality, in the hope that self-awareness will go a long way in preserving their integrity and assuring that they behave appropriately in the area of sexuality and personal relationships. As Rossetti writes, "Candidates who believe that a commitment to a celibate lifestyle will help them put their sexual problems behind them are headed for trouble. . . . Perhaps what is needed today is not a magic screen to solve all our problems but improved education and training."

A SEXUAL/AFFECTIVE HISTORY

A sexual/affective history should be taken after a candidate has spent about two years in formation or, ideally, before a pastoral year experience. This time frame allows the candidate to have a certain degree of confidence in seminary personnel and to establish trust that the seminary is supporting his candidacy toward ordination. Doing a sexual/affective history before a pastoral year experience enables the candidate to enter the pastoral experience with a good deal of self-awareness and confidence. Also, it allows the candidate sufficient time before ordination to deal with critical areas of concern.

A sexual/affective history should be conducted in a confidential interview in order to allow the candidate the utmost degree of ease and honesty. Although an interview covering the eight areas mentioned below might need to be conducted in more than one

session, the entire sexual/affective history should be taken within one day. It is helpful if the candidate is given the opportunity to see and reflect on the questions beforehand.

The interview should be carried out by a trained clinician. Ideally, the results of the interview should be shared by the clinician with the candidate and the candidate's spiritual director, thus allowing the candidate to discuss significant issues that emerge in the interview with his spiritual director in the remaining years before ordination. This "internal forum" approach avoids making a candidate's psychosexual history a subject for faculty discussion and critique.

Some would argue that this history should be discussed in the "external forum," as seminary personnel have the right to know as much about each candidate as possible in order to make an informed recommendation for orders. It is crucial that a faculty's external mechanisms of assessment evaluate a candidate's psychosexual maturity. Questions about this aspect of a candidate's life should be a regular part of meetings between the candidate and his adviser/mentor. At the same time, to introduce the intimate details of a sexual/affective history into the public arena precludes, at least to some degree, a candidate's total honesty and level of comfort in addressing his sexual/affective history. The goal of seminary formation is to educate the best priests possible. This education necessarily includes both internal and external facets. I would argue that a sexual/affective history sustains its best effectiveness for the candidate and for the church if it is discussed in the internal forum.

It might be argued that sharing the results of the psychosexual interview with a candidate's spiritual director makes the director a "double agent," working for the candidate's spiritual growth while monitoring his personal and sexual integrity. There should, however, be a sense of trust and an ease of relationship between a candidate and his spiritual director, which would permit the director to move the candidate in necessary directions to honestly pursue human integrity and sexual wholeness—even if this means urging the candidate to leave the seminary formation program.

Age and cultural differences among candidates must be taken into account in conducting and interpreting a sexual/affective history. The clinician should tailor his or her approach and questions in light of the individual candidate's age and level of psychosexual maturity.

Cultural differences are critical in the area of sexual/affective histories. Some cultural groups sustain an almost overwhelming inability to speak about per-

sonal sexual matters. This phenomenon becomes even more complicated and problematic when candidates for the priesthood are interviewed for a psychosexual history by a female clinician. In some cultures, people believe that individuals who “possess” a religious vocation must avoid any direct communication that might damage their direct call from God. In addition, people in certain cultures do not want to appear to be less than perfect. For some cultural groups, homosexuality is taboo; thus, any authentic discussion about perceived or true homosexuality is extremely difficult with a candidate from such a culture.

THE INTERVIEW

The following history was designed fundamentally by Stephen J. Rossetti and Carmen Meyer. It is used here with permission. I am also grateful to Monsignor J. Warren Holleran for his expert help with the questions and to Richard M. Gula, S.S., for his helpful guidance in preparing this article.

Family of origin. *Goal:* To obtain an understanding of broad family attitudes about sexuality. In all individuals, the single most important circumstance determinative of affective and sexual development is the family environment. The clinician is looking for signs of discomfort around sexuality in the family of origin—a discomfort that is likely to have been passed on to the candidate.

1. Was sexuality discussed openly by your parents, extended family, or older siblings? What was said about sexuality?
2. How comfortable were family members in discussing sex and sexuality?
3. What messages, direct or tacit, were conveyed about sexuality in your family?
4. How did you learn the facts of life?
5. Were there any other persons in your family or early life whose attitudes about sexuality affected you? Who were these persons? What were their attitudes? How did their attitudes affect you?

Prepubescent sexual development. *Goal:* To obtain an understanding of the candidate’s earliest sexual feelings and experiences. Early sexual stimulation is a risk factor for later sexual problems. An absence of curiosity about sex and a lack of awareness of sexual interests can be risk factors for later sexual problems, such as unintegrated sexuality.

1. At what age were you first aware of sexual feelings or your own sexuality?

2. When did you first have crushes, interests in, or curiosity about others?
3. Were you involved in any early childhood sexual play or exploration? Describe each experience, including the ages and genders of other participants, your age at the time, and your feelings about your behavior. Who initiated it? Where did it occur? Did you feel guilty?
4. Did you ever feel pressured by an adult to behave in stereotypically masculine or feminine ways (e.g., as a male, being forced to play sports in which you had no interest or talent)? If so, who pressured you? How did you feel? Did you feel that you were a disappointment to that person?

Sexual abuse history. *Goal:* To determine if the candidate has experienced any sexual abuse and/or exploitation. It is important to gain not just a factual history of any such experiences but also an understanding of their impact on the candidate, both physically and emotionally. How sexual abuse was dealt with by the individual and the family can give insights into the family and the candidate’s role within it.

1. When you were growing up, did anyone older than you ever touch you or look at you in a way that was blatantly or overtly sexual, or that you experienced as unwanted or intrusive? If so, describe the specific incident, the frequency, the duration, your age and the age of the other person at the time, and your relationship with the other person.
2. How did you feel about that sexual experience? What do you think about it now?
3. Did you ever tell anyone about the experience or discuss it with anyone? Who? How did they respond? What happened? If you did not speak to anyone about it, why not?
4. As a child or adolescent, were you ever involved in any sexual play, exploration, fondling, masturbation, or sexual exposure with someone younger than yourself? What were the age and gender of the other person(s)? Who initiated it? Were you ever caught? How did you feel about the experience? How do you think the other person(s) felt about the experience?

Puberty and adolescence. *Goal:* To obtain an understanding of the candidate’s sexual development during adolescence, particularly with regard to puberty and masturbatory history. Sexual deviancy often shows its first signs in adolescence. People with excessive sexual involvement in adolescence as well as people who report no sexual curiosity or sexual challenges during adolescence, may have sexual problems.

1. Were you prepared for the bodily changes you experienced during the onset of puberty? Did anyone talk to you about what would happen to your body or what to expect?
2. How old were you when you entered puberty? What was the experience like? What were your parents' reactions to your entering puberty?
3. How did you feel about the changes in your body? Did you feel self-conscious around your peers? Did you feel like you were developing or maturing at the same rate as your peers?
4. Were you ever teased or singled out by peers for being different?
5. How old were you when you had your first nocturnal emission? Did you know what it was? What were your feelings about it? Do you remember what your sexual fantasies were at the time of the emission?
6. Did anyone talk with you about masturbation? What were you told about masturbation? How old were you when you first masturbated? How did you feel about it? Did you feel guilty? Did you know that other people did it?
7. What were the fantasies you had when you first masturbated? What fantasies did you usually have during subsequent masturbations?
8. Did you discuss masturbation with peers at any stage? How frequent was masturbation in adolescence, or whenever it first began?
9. During adolescence, did you ever masturbate with others? Were you ever involved in group masturbation? If so, what were the ages and genders of the participants? Who initiated it? What was the frequency and duration?

Sexual orientation. *Goal:* To obtain an understanding of the candidate's awareness of his sexual orientation and his acceptance of that orientation.

1. Can you remember any sexual dreams you have had? What genders and approximate ages were the figures in the dreams?
2. What is your sexual orientation? How do you know what your sexual orientation is? What are the concrete signs you use to tell you what your orientation is? Are you comfortable with your sexual orientation?
3. Have you ever felt curious about or been sexually aroused by, or could you have been sexually aroused by, members of your own sex? Did you ever tell anyone? Did you try to hide it?
4. What was the attitude in your family about homosexuality? How did you feel about that attitude?
5. What was, and currently is, your attitude about homosexuality?

6. If you were going to enter into a genital sexual encounter, what type of person would you prefer for a partner?
7. How old were you when you discovered your sexual orientation? Describe the situation.
8. How did you feel at the time about your sexual orientation? If you had feelings of attraction toward individuals of your own gender, what did you think these feelings said about you?
9. Some adults prefer to have sexual relationships with younger people, under the age of 18. Have you ever felt that way? What do you think of people who do?
10. Have you ever had sexual fantasies about people under the age of 18? Have you ever found yourself attracted to or aroused by young people? Please describe the situation and age of the young person.

Dating and adult sexual activity. *Goal:* To obtain an understanding of the candidate's experience of dating and adult sexual activity. If a person's sexuality is un-integrated or unbalanced in any way, this will frequently be indicated in his sexual behavior. Extremes such as repression of all sexual feelings or compulsive sexual activity should cause concern.

1. Have you ever dated? Who were your partners? Was there any sexual contact? How old were you?
2. Have you ever been in love? How old were you and the other person? What was the gender of the other person? Describe the relationship between you and this person. What happened to the relationship?
3. Has marriage ever been an option for you? Would you like it to be?
4. Have you ever been married? What was your marriage like for you? What is your present relationship with your former wife, if she is living? What leads you to think that you do not want to marry again in the future? Have you ever fathered any children? What has your responsibility for them been like?
5. When was your last sexual contact?
6. How frequently do you masturbate? What are your fantasies?
7. Have you ever had a sexual encounter with someone you did not know before that time? How often have such encounters occurred? Where did you meet the person(s) involved? Describe the events leading up to the encounters, their frequency and location, and the sexual behavior that occurred.
8. Have you ever been treated for a sexually transmitted disease?
9. Have you ever been tested for HIV / AIDS? If so, why?

Paraphilia and other problematic sexual behavior.

Goal: To determine if the candidate has engaged in sexually deviant or problematic behavior. The presence of previous deviant sexual behavior or a deviant sexual arousal pattern is cause for considerable concern and should be investigated as thoroughly as possible.

1. Did you ever engage in any sexual behavior that others might have considered to be unusual? If so, please describe.
2. Have you ever paid someone for sex? If so, explain.
3. Have you ever read "adult" magazines, magazines with pictures of children, or magazines that others might consider to be pornographic? What were the magazines? How often do you use them? What ages and genders are the people shown? When was the last time you looked at one?
4. Have you ever visited an "adult" bookstore? When was the last time you visited one? How often do you go? What do you do inside?
5. Did you ever engage in any other sexual behavior, such as exposing yourself to other people? Please describe.
6. Have you ever taken minors on vacations, on overnight trips, or out to dinner? If so, please describe. Were any other adults present?
7. As an adult, have you ever slept in the same bed or shared overnight accommodations with any minors?
8. Have you ever found yourself, when masturbating, thinking about people you have known who are under the age of 18?
9. Has anyone ever suggested or alleged that you had a sexual encounter with someone under the age of 18?
10. Have you ever been in a situation where you could have or did become sexually aroused or acted inappropriately with someone under the age of 18? If so, what was your relationship with the minor? How old were both of you? What happened?
11. Have you ever had a sexual encounter with someone with whom you had a supervisory relationship (e.g., teacher/student, pastoral minister/parishioner, counselor/counselee, employer/employee)?
12. Do you find some things or activities sexually arousing that other people might consider to be different or unusual?

Current management of sexual behavior and feelings.

Goal: To understand how the candidate experiences, manages, and integrates his sexual feelings, especially in light of his hope to enter a celibate, chaste

lifestyle. Areas of concern include an absence of sexual awareness, a spiritualization of sexuality, excessive scruples and/or moralizing around sexuality, compulsive sexual behavior, and denial of sexual feelings.

1. How do you currently experience your sexual desires or innate sexuality?
2. When are you aware of yourself as a sexual person?
3. How do you understand and respond to your sexual desires?
4. What challenges regarding your sexuality do you currently face? How are you attempting to deal with these challenges?
5. Are you able to fulfill a desire for nurturance and love in your life?
6. Who is your closest friend? How often do you see each other? What do you do and talk about together?
7. Do you have any physical contact with other people? Please describe.
8. How do you understand the commitment to celibacy?
9. How should celibates deal with their sexuality?
10. Do you think you will be able to live a life of celibate chastity and be at peace with such a lifestyle?
11. What difficulties and struggles do you think you will experience in trying to live celibate chastity?
12. What will be the joys and rewards of a celibate life?
13. What do you think would happen if you fell in love?

RECOMMENDED READING

- Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry. *A Reflection Guide on Human Sexuality and the Ordained Priesthood*. Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983.
- LaHaye, T. *If Ministers Fail, Can They Be Restored?* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1990.
- Ormerod, N., and T. Ormerod. *When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Seven Hills Book Distributors, 1995.
- Program of Priestly Formation*, 4th ed. Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1994.



Father Gerald D. Coleman, S.S., is president and rector of St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California. He is also director of Health and Health Care Centers for the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Dual Relationships in Therapy

Janet Malone, C.N.D., Ed.D.

Today there is regular media coverage of professional misconduct generally and sexual misconduct specifically. This article addresses those issues within the parameters of dual relationships in therapy and concomitant boundary violations. The following observations can easily be extrapolated to the dual relationships that occur within the contexts of spiritual direction and accompaniment.

As Kenneth Pope and Melba Vasquez write in their book *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling*, "dual relationships jeopardize professional judgment, clients' welfare, and the process of therapy." Both the American and Canadian Psychological Associations' codes of ethics uphold the ethical standard of the therapist's respect of the client and maintain that the therapist's prime responsibility is to the client and the client's well-being. "Records indicate that dual role relationships represent the most frequent violation of ethical codes," according to the *Ethical Standards Casebook* of the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD).

In this overview of dual relationships in therapy, boundaries and boundary violations are defined. Next, dual relationships and their types are outlined. Sexual dual relationships are highlighted, with a look at incidence and gender differences. Therapists' tolerance for dual relationships and the effects of such

relationships on clients are discussed. Finally, some strategies for the prevention of dual relationships within the context of therapy are offered.

BOUNDARIES FOR PROTECTION

Although boundary violations can occur in many types of relationships—including those between an individual and his or her parents, significant others, siblings, peers, spouse, colleagues, boss, and clergy—the focus here is on boundary violations within the therapeutic relationship.

In everyday life, one might view a boundary as a barrier, a separator, a fence, a wall. When the term *boundary* is used in reference to a limit within an interpersonal relationship, its connotation is more positive. As Anne Katherine points out in her book *Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin*, such a boundary is seen as a necessary protection that ensures personal identity, integrity, and order; it is what separates one person from the next. Each of us has physical, emotional, sexual, relational, and spiritual boundaries. Katherine considers the two main categories of boundaries to be the physical and the emotional.

Boundary formation appears to begin in infancy. Relationships with significant others and the feedback received about where one person starts and the

other begins—physically, emotionally, sexually, relationally, and spiritually—help establish boundaries or the lack thereof. Because boundaries require ongoing maintenance, it is crucial for an individual to learn early in life that he or she has a right to have boundaries. In order to become a separate person who has a say in how others treat him or her and recognizes when his or her boundaries have been violated, one must know one's boundaries in different types of relationships. Katherine notes that "learning about and connecting with feelings is essential to complete boundary development." Being connected to one's feelings decreases the likelihood of another violating one's boundaries. According to Katherine, sexual boundary violations in particular "impair total boundary development."

DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

The AACD's *Ethical Standards Casebook* defines a dual relationship as one in which "one person simultaneously or sequentially plays two or more roles with another person." As Pope and Vasquez observe, within the counseling/therapy context—whether during or after therapy—a dual relationship exists "when the therapist is in another, significant relationship with one of his or her patients."

There are several types of dual relationships, including social, financial, business, professional, and sexual. In *Ethical Issues in Counseling*, Ronald Stein elaborates on such relationships within some of these contexts. He contends that "dual relationships include research with or treatment of employees, students, supervisees, close friends, or relatives." Pope and Vasquez indicate that most counselors and therapists agree that in any dual relationship, boundaries are violated, even if this is done unintentionally. Katherine concurs: "A boundary violation is committed when someone knowingly or unknowingly crosses the emotional, physical, spiritual, or sexual limits of another."

The type of dual relationship cited most frequently in the literature is that involving a counselor's or therapist's sexual intimacy with a client. Katherine points out that sexual intimacy is not limited to sexual actions; it can include speaking to the client about one's sexual attraction to him or her. This type of dual relationship obviously changes the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship and is "the most egregious" sort of professional misconduct in which a therapist can engage, as Martin Lakin notes in *Coping with Ethical Dilemmas in Psychotherapy*. Corroborating Lakin's assertion, E. Jerry Phares, author of *Clinical Psychology: Concepts, Methods, and Profession*, states: "Make no

mistake, ethical principles condemn such behavior in no uncertain terms."

INCIDENCE AND GENDER DIFFERENTIATION

Lakin, and Pope and Vasquez, discuss the results of a national survey on sexual dual relationships, in which therapists self-reported. Of the respondents, 87 percent reported "attraction toward a client . . . [with] attraction experienced by a greater percentage (95 percent) of male than of female (76 percent) clinicians" (Pope and Vasquez). Lakin elaborates on these percentages by specifying a gender difference: "a large majority . . . of male therapists experienced sexual attraction toward their female clients."

It is important to highlight, in discussing the incidence of sexual violations as self-reported by therapists in a recent study, that "upwards of 6 percent of practitioners have become involved sexually with their patients/clients" (Lakin). In addition, the most effective predictor of whether a therapist will become sexually involved with clients is "whether that therapist has previously engaged in sex with a client" (Pope and Vasquez). Fortunately, as Pope and Vasquez report, "the overwhelming majority of clinicians . . . noted that they never seriously considered engaging in sex with [a] client."

At present, approximately 75 percent of clinicians are male, as noted by both Phares and Lakin. "Overwhelmingly," writes Lakin, "the therapists as well as the supervisors involved have been male, and the patients/clients and supervisees have been female." This preponderance of male therapists and female clients may affect how sexual dual relationships are viewed and tolerated within the therapy relationship.

VIOLATIONS WITHIN THERAPY

Although a boundary violation can be "initiated" by either the client or the therapist, the counselor or therapist has the ethical responsibility to ensure the well-being of the client—which, after all, is the primary purpose of the relationship.

Because the client is vulnerable in his or her state of need, it is crucial that the therapist respect the client's boundaries and avoid any temptation to exploit the client in sexual or nonsexual dual relationships.

Integral to a counselor's or therapist's training is his or her responsibility to the client. And because of the nature of the therapeutic relationship, as Pope and Vasquez write, "the ethics of psychotherapy and counseling are inherently related to power and trust." The therapist's professional role must therefore be solely that of helper—not peer, business partner, or lover.

Training and position give the therapist the power of both expertise and status. Although the client may have similar power in other contexts, within the therapeutic relationship, he or she is dependent on the counselor. This results in a de facto inequality, no matter how "equal" the therapist tries to make the situation. In entering into a sexual dual relationship, the therapist, because of his or her professional role, has more power than the client; thus, no such relationship is ever equal. The *Ethical Standards Casebook* of the AACD states that "the power differential . . . is so great that issues of coercion and abuse of power can be involved."

A sexual dual relationship represents a conflict of interest because the therapist is using the client to satisfy his or her own needs and desires. Thus, the therapeutic relationship is compromised, and the therapist's clinical judgment and objectivity are called into question. Katherine likens a sexual boundary violation on the part of a therapist to incest. Ronald Stein observes, in *Ethical Issues in Counseling*, "Some writers suggest that anytime a therapist engages in sexual intercourse with a client, it should be deemed rape because of the vulnerability of the client, even if the client has given consent."

In a male-dominated profession, the incidence of sexual dual relationships points up the disproportionate number of female victims. In his research, Stein found that of "fifty-two cases reported, 56 percent of the victims were female."

OPPOSING VIEWS EXIST

Although dual relationships can be sexual or non-sexual, the literature reflects the overwhelming majority's opinion that within the context of therapy, all dual relationships violate client boundaries and are unethical. Pope and Vasquez refer to "the harm and exploitation that result from both sexual and non-sexual [dual] relationships." From their perspective, there is zero tolerance for such relationships between therapists and their clients, whether during the therapeutic relationship or upon termination of that relationship. Transference and countertransference issues are as possible after therapy as they are during therapy.

In contrast, it is interesting to note that Karen Strohm and Susan Stefanowski express support for some dual relationships in their contribution to the *Ethical Standards Casebook* of the AACD. In that piece, entitled "Dual Role Relationships," they note that in writing the article together as professor and student, they were, in effect, in a dual relationship. They use their own case to support the contention that not all dual relationships must be avoided or as-

sumed to be harmful. From their perspective, such relationships "lie in a continuum [that includes] those that are potentially very harmful . . . [and] those in which there is little potential for harm." They clarify their stance by emphasizing that "sexual intimacy between counselors and clients violate[s] the most fundamental ethical responsibility of mental health professionals" and by reporting the damaging effects of such relationships on clients.

GENDER VARIABLES

Because most therapists and counselors are male and most of their clients are female, concern has been expressed that the information currently available may underrepresent both the scope and frequency of dual relationships and boundary violations. Taking into account the male-female clinician distribution in their own research, Pope and Vasquez note that "males tended to rate social/financial involvements and dual professional roles as more ethical and reported engaging in these involvements with more clients than did females."

The lack of respect for women reflected in female sex-role stereotypes and biases can carry over into the therapeutic relationship. In this regard, Pope and Vasquez conclude that those in the mental health professions "seem exceptionally resourceful in finding ways to deny, justify, trivialize, and discount forms of serious harm for which the perpetrators are mostly men and the victims are mostly women." Some of the strategies used by therapists to justify and tolerate dual relationships include denial, naïveté, protestations of the prevalence of such relationships ("everybody does it"), and claims of being uninformed, having personal problems, providing benefits to the client, having client consent, and engaging in a form of bartering.

VULNERABILITY OF CLIENT

The very fact that a client has entered into a therapeutic relationship renders him or her vulnerable. Pope and Vasquez write that "the great vulnerability of the client highlights the power of the therapist and the trust that must characterize the client's relationship with the therapist." Furthermore, as Strohm and Stefanowski observe, "When clients enter into a counseling relationship, they expect their well-being to be paramount. When a counselor enters into a sexual relationship with a client, that expectation is violated."

Because of the power imbalance and the breach of trust inherent in sexual dual relationships, Stein writes, the damage to clients can be "deep, devastating, and long-lasting." Strohm and Stefanowski re-

port that in one study, such damage had been wreaked on 90 percent of the client population; the other 10 percent experienced some initial denial and/or a delayed reaction. A client who recognizes and then reports such a boundary violation must face the possibility of not being believed and deal with the realization of how the sexual dual relationship has affected him or her. As Strohm and Stefanowski note, possible damaging effects include "inability to trust, hesitation about seeking further help, severe depression, hospitalization, and suicide."

STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

As noted earlier, Lakin reports that recent research indicates that "upwards of 6 percent" of therapists report having engaged in sexual dual relationships with their clients. The available literature does not indicate the percentage of therapists entering into other types of dual relationships. It is likely that the numbers are higher in nonsexual dual relationships, which counselors and therapists tend to regard with more tolerance and justification.

Given the prevalence of dual relationships in the context of therapy and the concern over their effects on the client, what measures are in place to educate the counselor on this issue? Common sense would seem to demand prevention as a measure of paramount importance. Prevention lies in the therapist's being adequately informed about the nature and consequences of both nonsexual and sexual dual relationships and boundary violations. In the research he reports on, Lakin notes, only 9 percent of the therapists thought they had received sufficient training regarding sexual dual relationships.

It seems clear that one means of prevention, of utmost importance for counselors and therapists, would be a renewed study of the fine print in their codes of ethics regarding responsibility to and respect for clients. Additional prevention strategies would include the maintenance and modeling of healthy boundaries by the therapist. Such strategies would require the therapist to increase self-awareness, develop a healthy personal life, consult with

other professionals regarding appropriate boundaries in the therapeutic setting, and avoid potentially risky situations with the client.

The observance of professional role boundaries is crucial to the prevention of client boundary violations. As Pope and Vasquez write, "the role boundaries and norms in the therapeutic relationship . . . serve a protective function that serves to prevent exploitation." In an article entitled "Boundaries in Ministerial Relationships" (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, Spring 1993), Father Paul B. Macke underscores that point with the statement that "fuzzy boundaries can lead to chaos and confusion."

The paucity of information currently available on boundary violations and dual relationships in the therapeutic context is evidence that Pope and Vasquez are right in their assertion that "addressing this issue vigorously and effectively" is imperative.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Katherine, A. *Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin*. Toronto, Ontario: Fireside/Parkside, 1991.
- Lakin, M. *Coping with Ethical Dilemmas in Psychotherapy*. New York, New York: Pergamon, 1991.
- Macke, P. "Boundaries in Ministerial Relationships." HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 14, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 23-25.
- Pope, K., and M. Vasquez. *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1991.
- Strohm, K., and S. Stefanowski. "Dual Role Relationships." In *AACD Ethical Standards Casebook*, ed. by B. Herlihy and L. Golden. Alexandria, Virginia: American Association for Counseling and Development, 1990.
- Whitfield, C. *Boundaries and Relationships*. Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, 1993.



Sister Janet Malone, C.N.D., Ed.D., works as a consultant, researcher, and trainer with lay and religious groups in North America and Europe. She lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The Courage to Be

James Torrens, S.J.

to heave yourself out of bed
into the day's scowl,

step into the rider's seat
when the door's dented in,

keep the limbs of truth
out of the blades of diplomacy;

to pick up the nagging receiver,

own up when nobody knows;

to set the hot memo aside
and let it cool,

raise questions
with one who controls by anger;

to let your little ones
out of the tight circle;

to dwell in the family of pain
and not take it ill.

the pitcher Walter Johnson. I liked to play baseball but was only passable at it, thanks partly to ground balls. You have to get down to field a ground ball. "Keep your eye on it," coaches would shout. I admit I shied from the hot ones, given their penchant for a nasty hop.

A city boy, I also shied from guns. Our Jesuit high school had ROTC (US Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps); I did not join, but I got myself into the ROTC band on the strength of a few clarinet lessons. World War II was happening to my elders, the Korean War would happen soon to my contemporaries, and I had little stomach for bullets whizzing around. In Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage*, a staple of high-school reading, I had no trouble imagining the flight of young recruits from the battlefield.

To put it briefly, the topic of courage has long been at the back of my mind. Nerve, energy against obstacles, readiness for conflict—that comes more readily to some than to others, as Aristotle pointed out in his *Ethics*. It is strongest in the young, which makes them very liable to drafting. Perhaps those who have less of this wonderful force are more aware of it.

With adulthood, the context modifies. For women, including adolescent women, childbearing has to pose a great test of courage. Never mind that almost all must pass that way; the individual is still tried. With child rearing, the demands soften, it would seem, but become long-term. Demands complexify

Growing up, I did a lot of hiking with my father. Our favorite topic as we walked was the baseball legends of his youth in Washington, DC, especially

and accumulate for everyone as life goes on. Courage can amount to facing just one solitary day—the one that is waiting to take a hundred bites out of you. Emily Dickinson, as we might expect, put the matter succinctly: “To fight aloud, is very brave— / But *gallanter*, I know / Who charge within the bosom / The cavalry of Woe.”

Marianne Moore extended the domain of courage into the realm of the big questions about life and death. In her poem “What are Years?” she asks, “Whence / is courage: the unanswered question, / the resolute doubt,— / dumbly calling, deafly listening—that / in misfortune, even death, / encourages others / and in its defeat, stirs / the soul to be strong?”

Paul Tillich, the philosophic theologian, strikes a chord merely with the title of his book *The Courage to Be*. Wilhelm Pauck, in *The Thought of Paul Tillich*, writes: “For Tillich life was filled with anxiety resulting from the threat of nonbeing that inheres in finiteness, an anxiety that appears in three forms: that of fate and death, that of emptiness and meaninglessness and that of guilt and condemnation.” Ann Belford Ulanov, in the same volume, pursues that topic: “In his willingness to combat the anxiety of nonbeing, Paul Tillich received and welcomed anything that promised to enlarge his—and others’—courage to be.”

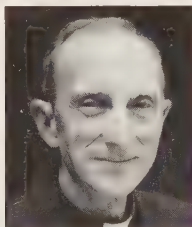
According to Tillich, says Ulanov, “we are anxious that we will be swept away, lost in currents of undifferentiated emotions, needs, and drives, never to be able again to form ourselves into a discrete entity, to become a person who can hold it all. . . . We refuse to admit into awareness all the bits of being available to us—in our emotions, images, ambitions, needs, hurts, longings—and so they remain there in the shadows, undeveloped and unrealized.” Also, “an abundance of meanings . . . confounds us. We flee into a defense of our small and partial view,” when in fact life is

addressing us in some fragment of experience, confronting us, handing us something of great importance. According to Tillich, love alone is the responsive opening that allows us to be ourselves.

Even in the most savage conditions—as Tillich and other survivors of the Nazis, such as Viktor Frankl, point out—Being summons us. If this sounds like existentialist philosophy, in a way it is; but Tillich was always also the Lutheran pastor, reminding us what trouble we have facing the presence of God—the “presence that can turn a disastrous blow into a source of renewal, a grace that points to the fact of goodness dwelling there, real, alive, in the midst of terrible evil.” A positive response takes faith.

A generation ago, many of us Jesuits were convoked for a community-building weekend that included the exercise of picking and sharing a favorite passage from the New Testament—one holding a high charge of personal meaning. I remember that in our small group of eight, three people, including myself, picked the episode of the storm on the lake. According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus is awakened by panicky apostles from his sleep at the stern of the boat, and he chides them: “Why are you afraid, you weak believers?” In Saint John (chapter 6) he comes walking over the turbulent water with the same message.

That is still the Good News. Does the world seem to be convulsing under our feet? God seeks us out. God is with us. Only have faith.



Father James Torrens, S.J., is an associate editor of *America*.

The Essentials of Formative Ministry

Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.

Enlarge the site of your tent, and let the curtains of your home be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your ropes and strengthen your stakes. (Isaiah 54:2)

At first glance, the above line from Isaiah reads like a real estate offer—or a home-improvement special from a biblical-era landowner and tentmaker during a liquidation sale. However, if we are willing to look at and reflect on this text through another lens, we begin to see some components of the general process that takes place in formative ministry. By “formative ministry” I mean the tasks and responsibilities of those whose principal work involves retreats or spiritual direction or religious formation or the various forms of pastoral counseling and guidance. These and similar ministries incorporate a wide spectrum of supports and techniques for encouraging and enhancing human and spiritual growth and development, for promoting human and spiritual formation.

The content of the quote from Isaiah lends itself to interpretation from the perspective of formative ministry: it announces a promise for the future, an encouragement to hope, a call to trust in the Lord’s compassionate and faithful presence and activity, a summons to faith. The opening section of chapter 54

in Isaiah, verses 1 through 10, concludes with God’s own pledge: “The mountains may depart and the hills may disappear, but my steadfast love will not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be withdrawn, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” The work of formative ministers precisely echoes that promise, encouragement, call, and summons. This is evident in the skills such ministers need and use in journeying with others along the pathways and passages of life.

The images used in the text from Isaiah can serve as metaphors for the experiences and challenges involved in the growth, development, and transformation that individuals seek through the support and assistance of formative ministers. This article is a simple meditation on these metaphors as a means of encouraging and supporting all those whose daily ministry is a commitment to place their gifts and skills at the service of the human and spiritual formation of others. Through that commitment, they can enrich the present quality of life for others and thereby point the way toward a future marked by hope and trust and faith. Even though these reflections are shaped by my own experiences in the ministries of spiritual direction, retreats, and religious formation, I encourage readers to remain close to and reflect on their own experiences in formative ministry in order to discover anew the rich gifts and blessings they bring to others.

LARGER TENTS

“Enlarge the site of your tent”: Human and spiritual growth and development, through various ages and stages, brings with it the realization of a periodic need for additional or completely new realms of experiments and experiences if that growth and development are to continue. This realization can take a variety of forms, touching many aspects of life. One’s prayer may merit serious examination to evaluate the continued usefulness and effectiveness of established methods. The need for such analysis is especially acute when an individual recognizes that his or her prayer has become a routine performance with no real passion. Likewise, competence in some area of ministry may need simple refreshing or complete retooling. This becomes clearer as the individual monitors apostolic involvements and gains insights from coworkers’ suggestions and observations. If relationships are experienced and perceived as all burden and little or no blessing, the individual’s approach to and expectations of relationships may need reality testing to determine what adjustments are necessary. Similarly, everyday personal behavioral patterns may be changing in ways neither understood nor appreciated. The scrutiny of an objective eye may be needed to assist the individual in arriving at meaningful insights into those changes and developing a plan for future action.

These brief comments could be expanded further with additional specifics; the point here is simply to emphasize the periodic need to examine personal and ministerial and spiritual life to see what new situations or experiences need to be explored and possibly embraced. It is necessary to enlarge the site of the tent from time to time. This need prompts people to seek the assistance and guidance of appropriate formative ministers on a retreat or in spiritual direction or through pastoral counseling. Our role as formative ministers is to focus our skills toward helping individuals do whatever is necessary to explore and embrace the form of prayer or ministry or relationships or behaviors that will enhance their quality of life.

Formative ministers are not tent makers or even tent stretchers. Enlarging the tent, however it is done and whatever will be involved, is initiated and decided upon by the individual. Undoubtedly, external stimuli and input can bring new awarenesses to be integrated and new approaches to be considered. Our role as formative ministers is to provide, at least in part, such stimuli and input, and to assist the individual in interpreting them. Still, the “site of the tent” itself—personal, relational, and spiritual life—must always be esteemed as the intimate possession of the

individual. This is simply a matter of respect for human dignity.

As formative ministers we must therefore be skilled in discerned accompaniment. That is, we must cultivate the skills necessary to be available for a person as new dimensions of his or her tent are unfolded, to observe the process and progress, to discern any emerging obstacles, and to offer recommendations—all while respecting the individual’s freedom. Any level of initiating and implementing modifications in prayer, ministry, relationships, or behaviors is the right and responsibility of the individual. Through our discernment and accompaniment in formative ministry, however, we do gain the insights needed to provide continued assistance by listening to and learning from the individual’s present initiatives and planned strategies.

WIDER CURTAINS

“Let the curtains of your home be stretched out”: Human and spiritual growth and development occasionally need prompting—anything from a helping hand to a nudging elbow to a kicking foot. The individual may have much more potential and capability than provided for by the current—or even the proposed—tent site. Prayer, ministry, relationships, and behaviors need to be challenged from time to time and given higher expectations that reflect more accurately the person’s intentions, priorities, abilities, and aspirations. This need for challenge does not necessarily signal resistance to change; it simply indicates the individual’s lack of awareness or confidence about what direction to take or what techniques to use.

Our role as formative ministers can be more active during this prompting stage than in the initial stages of accompaniment. We can draw on the insights and experience and knowledge we have acquired from our work with the person thus far. The individual’s “curtains” may need “stretching out”—that is, he or she may need to reach beyond perceived or assumed limits. Those limits, those “curtains,” can be stretched out to accommodate the individual’s growth and development. Our formative skills can assist, accompany, and facilitate the stretching process through challenges and questions and suggestions, and sometimes through compelling recommendations. This has nothing to do with manipulation. Stretching out an individual’s curtains enables him or her to touch, see, and eventually try exactly what the minister has seen in that person through discerned accompaniment.

As formative ministers we must therefore be skilled in direct communication. That is, we must cultivate the skills necessary to be clear in our interpretations

Our role as formative ministers is to provide whatever information, insight, and incentive will assist the individual in arriving at a decision and in planning and implementing subsequent action

and caring in our instructions. Clarity and care are important precisely because stretching out the curtains encourages the individual to go beyond the known and the familiar. The individual's decision to continue the journey, even if that involves moving into apparent darkness, cannot be based solely on convincing arguments or eloquent rationales. Such a decision must be grounded in faith and the conviction that the chosen pathway will lead to further growth and development. Our direct communication will not make facing the unknown and the unfamiliar that lie ahead any less uncomfortable, but it can instill the individual with sufficient confidence to move beyond established patterns.

DECIDING NOT TO HOLD BACK

"Do not hold back": a simple exhortation, yet much more. Whether the formative process is focused on prayer, ministry, relationships, behaviors, or a combination of some or all of these elements, the individual must display a willingness to take up what needs to be done. The alternative will inevitably be the lack of any real progress. The formative process is initiated and sustained by the individual's choice to enter fully into all that is necessary for human and spiritual growth and development. This choice is founded on faith and trust, not on some alleged certainty that claims to guarantee clear sight of all that is yet to come. Faith and trust facilitate the decision-making process. In contrast, holding back confuses

and even counteracts that process: no tent will be enlarged; no curtains will be stretched out.

Our role as formative ministers is to provide whatever information, insight, and incentive will assist the individual in arriving at a decision and in planning and implementing subsequent action. Depending on the issues being addressed, the decision may be neither easy nor comfortable. There is always the possibility that the individual will experience direct or indirect resistance to making the decision or to acting on it once it is made. However versatile our formative ministry skills, we cannot render the decision any less difficult or painful. We can, though, communicate a sense of peacefulness and purpose, based on our experience and knowledge and observation of the person's progress, potentials, preferences, and personality. Peace and purpose can motivate the individual to make a decision and to act on it as necessary, whether in terms of prayer or ministry or relationships or behaviors.

As formative ministers we must therefore be skilled in offering distinct support. That is, we must cultivate the skills to assure and encourage the individual regarding the decision to be made and the appropriate direction to be taken. The moment of decision can be perceived and experienced as a particularly lonely time, without a clear sense of available helps. The decision ever remains the individual's to make, but we can provide the distinctive support he or she needs in order to sift through many options, evaluate them, and then trust the quality and necessity of the ultimate decision and projected action. Our support cannot be a panacea for the individual, but it can reflect and does continue the consistency and quality of our discerned accompaniment and direct communication.

LONGER ROPES

"Lengthen your ropes and strengthen your stakes": Even with a decision made and a direction taken, there is no guarantee that prior patterns, previous attitudes, and past behaviors will not reappear to draw the individual into old ways. Lengthening ropes and strengthening stakes are measures to ensure fidelity. Longer ropes provide the support necessary for the enlarged tent and the stretched curtains. During difficult periods in prayer, ministry, relationships, or preferred behaviors, the risk is ever present that the individual may lose touch with newly acquired skills, newly developed attitudes, and newly adopted behaviors. As formative ministers we can advise the individual concerning the establishment of a support system for maintaining and continuing the process of growth and development that has already begun.

Specifically, our recommendations can offer the guidance necessary for organizing a system of supports that will be actual, accessible, appropriate, and adjustable.

Stronger stakes provide the stability necessary to keep the tent firmly planted on the ground. With the person's new practices and procedures come excitement and enthusiasm, which can occasionally blur the very principles and convictions that are foundational to those practices and procedures. As formative ministers we can emphasize the importance of keeping in touch with what is most valuable in prayer, ministry, relationships, and behaviors, given the person's evolving progress. This is not a matter of telling the individual how to conduct his or her everyday life or of deflating that excitement and enthusiasm. Our emphasis must be to highlight the priority of the basic vision that animates and drives the growth and development taking place.

Longer ropes and stronger stakes safeguard fidelity. This will ever remain a primary challenge in prayer, ministry, relationships, and behaviors. The difficult part may lie not in beginning the action that has been decided on but in continuing it. The newness of the action, as well as the initial excitement and enthusiasm characterizing significant points of progress, will eventually pass as other horizons emerge and engage the individual. The very fact that these characteristics are transitory indicates their inability to provide sufficient sustenance. Fidelity is a discipline based not on acquired technique or energizing experience but on the choice and conviction that the initiated action is an essential component of continued progress in prayer, ministry, relationships, or behaviors. Our role as formative ministers is to help the individual develop strategies that will facilitate most effectively the continuity of that progress.

As formative ministers we must therefore be skilled in providing diversified guidance. That is, we must be skilled in guiding the individual along the varied pathways inevitably encountered with consistent and healthy growth and development. Periods of difficulty, doubt, and disappointment will come, bringing with them the sense that efforts undertaken thus far have been mistakes or will be of little lasting value. The temptation for the individual will be to doubt or question his or her actions, to look for some "quick fix" solution, or to abandon the process altogether in discouragement. The guidance we offer must be diverse enough to assure the individual that the process of growth and development comprises a wide spectrum of experiences—some comfortable, others uncomfortable; some filled with light, others filled only with evidence of shadows.

QUALITIES DETERMINING INFLUENCE

Formative ministry necessitates more than a collection and combination of skills, however sophisticated. The significance and extent of the accompaniment, communication, support, and guidance we offer to others are not the roots of our effectiveness as formative ministers. Whether the context of our ministry is retreats, spiritual direction, religious formation, pastoral counseling, or fields related to any of these, the qualities that mark our ministerial life will have the most profound and lasting influence on those we serve. Indeed, the quality of our own lives will engrave the character of the ministry we bring to others.

Discerned accompaniment calls for the cultivation of several skills: availability, observation, discernment, recommendation, and respect. But the quality of life—the gift, really, that gives shape to all these skills—is wisdom. As formative ministers we are challenged to be wise ones, especially as we accompany others along the course of their life journeys and explore with them methods and means to enlarge their tent sites. No book or class or workshop can make us instantly wise and filled with insight. Wisdom is a gift, and we must seek it from its very source: God. We can create within ourselves an environment of receptivity for this gift by seriously and sincerely pursuing the cultivation of the skills that distinguish discerned accompaniment. Although those skills are not synonymous with wisdom, they will be a significant part of our openness to the gift of wisdom and our willingness to learn its ways.

Direct communication requires clear interpretations and caring instructions. Those we serve have the right to expect that our accompaniment will be more than passive participation. They will look to us for assistance and insight in interpreting their experiences, and for direction and suggestions as valuable instructions for their continued growth. Truly, they invite us to stretch the curtains of their "homes," their own lives. Truth is the quality that endows our interpretations and instructions with authenticity and authority. As formative ministers we are challenged to be seekers and speakers of truth, especially as we communicate to others our perspectives on their journeys. Truth, like wisdom, is a gift that reflects the very presence and activity of God within us and through us. We can cultivate our desire for this gift by our commitment to honesty and fairness in communicating with others. Honesty confirms our reliability; fairness reflects our objectivity. Both enable us to directly communicate the truth in order to sustain the growth and development of others.

Distinct support involves the skills of providing assurance and encouragement during decision-making processes. We assist others in shaping decisions that will most enhance their personal and spiritual growth and development. We assist them in moving forward so that there is no holding back in matters that will prove to be of tremendous importance in their lives. Prudence is the quality guiding this function. As formative ministers we are challenged to monitor the accuracy and appropriateness of our intuitions and interpretations, especially since we use them in the process of supporting others. Those we serve will look to us for confirmation that their judgments are sound and their plans achievable. They expect us to be cognizant of their capabilities and considerate of their struggles as these are communicated to us. Prudence is a gift that we invite and welcome through our own network of support and feedback from colleagues and other significant resource persons. If the support we give to others through our ministry is to be distinct and prudential, we must seek and use the means necessary to ensure that we are developing our ministerial skills with distinction and prudence.

Diversified guidance requires that we have a skilled and working knowledge of the possible pathways along which an individual may pursue continued growth and development. Understanding is the quality that enables us to see and suggest those pathways. As formative ministers we are challenged to have, or have access to, the means with which to guide others in ways suited to their vocations, situations, and aspirations. Those we serve look to us for understanding, which we can draw from our own stores of educational and experiential knowledge and competence as well as from other significant resources. Multiplying our academic credentials and expanding our experiences does not certify a deeper understanding of human life and the spiritual journey. However, our efforts to broaden our knowledge and competence can be doorways to the planting and growth of the gift of understanding within us. Our commitment to our own continuing formation is evidence that the diversified guidance we want to provide for others in ministry must be nurtured and fed by a constant openness to learn, to experience, and, ultimately, to understand.

A GRACED MINISTRY

"Enlarge the site of your tent, and let the curtains of your home be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your ropes and strengthen your stakes." This is the arena of formative ministry. We are given the privilege of walking with others on their personal and spiritual journeys, and even into their personal and spiritual lives. It is a privilege that places us directly and deeply within the realm of the workings of God's grace. We must therefore walk accordingly.

As formative ministers, we must be wise in our accompaniment, helping to enlarge the tents of those we serve, providing ample room for their growth and development. Our communication with the people who come to us must be filled with truth as we work to stretch out the curtains of their limits, expand their fields of sight, and propose new horizons for them. Our support must be prudent precisely so they do not hold back, so they can decide what directions to take now for a future marked with maturity and integrity. Our guidance must be characterized by understanding, to help them lengthen their ropes and strengthen their stakes, making firm and faithful the commitment to continue the journey already begun.

Our work as formative ministers is, finally, a graced ministry. It mediates God's grace as those we serve focus their energies on continuing and cooperating with the processes of human and spiritual growth and development. As formative ministers the quality of our own lives will be touched and blessed by that same grace. God's own promise is ours to possess, but most especially to pass on. "The mountains may depart and the hills may disappear, but my steadfast love will not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be withdrawn, says the Lord, who has compassion on you" (Isa. 54:10).



Brother Joel Giallanza, C.S.C., serves as assistant general for the Congregation of Holy Cross in Rome, Italy.

Mentoring Improves Vocation Promotion

Stephen W. Synan, F.M.S., Ph.D.

Two longtime presuppositions about successful vocation promotion are the need for personal contact and an ability to inspire. Unfortunately, these concepts, although acknowledged and respected universally, have rarely been defined. Neither have they been organized systematically to maximize their potential in recruiting candidates to religious life.

During the early-to-mid-1960s, many religious congregations began to question seriously their approach to vocation promotion and the formation of candidates. Over the past twenty years or so, a number of these groups introduced into the process of formation some changes that reflected the teachings and understanding of a post-Vatican II church.

The "contact program" was a common approach to recruiting that emerged during that period. Its initial statement of purpose was quite clear: to offer a new and innovative way to promote vocations and facilitate the process of initial formation. After twenty years of experience with such programs, however, many religious communities today are troubled by their apparent lack of results. They find themselves asking, Have the contact programs set up just after the Council worked as well as we thought they would? If not, why not? By exploring why these programs have been less than effective, congregations might be able to discover what is missing from them

—what necessary elements this new approach to recruiting and initial formation lacks.

A MARIST EXAMPLE

Over the past twenty-two years, the Marist Brothers, an institute of lay religious, developed a contact program. Its structure is similar to that of other programs for college-aged students with some interest in religious life. Developed around the scriptural invitation "Come and see," the Marist contact program is flexible enough to help each potential candidate grow toward a fuller understanding of Christian life and also make a commitment to it. In the final analysis, a young man's participation in the program should be a source of personal enrichment, greater self-knowledge, and deepening faith, whether or not he ultimately chooses to become a Marist brother.

From its inception, the Marist contact program was designed to meet the needs of those who participated. For example, the length of time reasonably needed by a young man to make an initial vocational choice is individually determined. One-on-one contact between the potential candidate and a Marist brother, or between the young man and a Marist community, provides the brothers with an opportunity to present religious life as a humanly and spiritually satisfying existence.

Unfortunately, a gap often develops quickly between the ideal and the real. The mentoring dimension of the Marist contact program, for example, has not been consistently maintained. While some brothers and potential candidates have been faithful to regular get-togethers, many have not. To understand more fully what this failure has meant, I undertook a study to see what, if any, influence mentoring might have during the period of contact and discernment. In other words, I asked the question, Is the Marist Brothers' contact program less than effective because it has failed to include fully one of its essential components? The answer to that question should be of interest to other groups that set up similar programs for vocation promotion and the initial formation of candidates.

MENTORING RELATIONSHIP EXPLORED

What hunches guided the design of this piece of research? That a continuing mentoring relationship in the life of a young man would help him realize more readily his potential for making choices about his life. That with the encouragement of his mentor, he would more confidently address questions about his life dream—that is, what he wants to do with his adult life—and his vocation. That through the experience of a mentoring relationship, a young man could identify and establish a structure for his life that would provide him with greater personal meaning and purpose.

The work of life-development researchers such as Daniel Levinson and theologians James W. Fowler and Sharon Parks support the notion that through a mentoring relationship, a Marist brother helps a young man develop an initial understanding about his vocation, spirituality, and possible call to religious life. This relationship also helps the young person recognize his abilities and potential to engage in ministry. The results of my own investigation support these notions.

LEVINSON ON ADULT MALE DEVELOPMENT

Psychologist Daniel Levinson looked to the developmental psychologist Erik Erikson when he began to formulate his own theory about the ways in which men change and grow throughout life. Levinson, however, stretched beyond Erikson for a fuller understanding and appreciation of each stage or era of development. Levinson contends that most men pass through a series of stages that underlie personal crises, govern emotional states and attitudes, and shape behavior. He suggests further that these phases are linked to age. For example, young men in their

late teens through early twenties—the very people who enter contact programs—are, according to Levinson, right in the middle of a major period of change and transition.

Life structure. Levinson uses the term *life structure* to describe “the overall pattern and design of a [person’s] life at any given time.” This structure changes continually, evolving through a series of alternating structure-building (stable) periods and structure-changing (transition) periods throughout the course of life. These latter periods of development shape the process of change.

Times of stability and transition. During a stable period, people must make meaningful choices about their life, establish a way of living out their choices, and integrate into their way of life the values and goals that are important to them. In contrast, a transition period terminates an existing life structure to provide for the possibility of a new one.

Eras of the life cycle. Levinson divides a man’s life cycle into a series of five eras, each lasting approximately twenty to twenty-five years. The first, pre-adulthood, starts at birth and lasts until the early twenties. It is followed by early adulthood—often described as the most tumultuous time of life—which begins at about age 22 or 23 and lasts until a person’s early forties. Middle adulthood gets under way in the late thirties to early forties, with the onset of the now well-renowned midlife transition, and ends at about the age of retirement, in the early sixties. Late adulthood follows, ending around age 80. The last era of the life cycle is late, late adulthood—from approximately age 80 to death.

The early adult transition. Levinson contends that a major transition takes place between the ages of 17 and 22. Two tasks must be accomplished during this early adult transition period: the termination of pre-adulthood and the initiation of early adulthood.

This transitional period between the first two eras of life involves various events, endings, separations—and, hopefully, transformation. A young man, for example, begins to ask questions about his place in the world. He often moves away from or changes certain relationships of dependency, and he explores his future life possibilities by making some initial choices and testing them.

Entering the adult world. Levinson describes the work of the next developmental phase as “entering the adult world.” Classified as a stable period, this phase demands a balance between two antithetical

tasks: exploration and commitment. A young person must explore while at the same time creating a more stable life structure. Why is this balance important? Achieving it helps the young person separate from a preadult world of parents and childhood associates, find ways to express important parts of the self, and form intimate relationships.

The novice phase of adulthood. Levinson classifies the period of development between approximately age 17 and the early thirties as the “novice phase” of development. An individual must address four developmental tasks during these important years: forming a life dream, developing mentoring relationships, establishing a ministry or occupation, and experiencing love relationships. (The study discussed in this article concentrated on the first two tasks.)

Forming and living out the dream. Just what is a life dream? It is the answer to this question: What shall I do with my adult life? Levinson contends that the dream—something that emerges, for most people, during the late teens to early twenties—plays a powerful and pervasive role in early adulthood. It often directs the initial choices of young adults and motivates the decision they make in structuring their future.

Whatever the nature of the life dream, the developmental task faced by young adults is to give it greater meaning and a place in their life. Those who build a life around their dream early on have a good chance for personal fulfillment. In contrast, those who for one reason or another betray their dream or are unable to pursue it will have to deal with the inevitable consequences later in life.

Mentoring relationships. Levinson observes that the mentor relationship is one of the most complex and developmentally important an individual can have in early adulthood. Such words as *counselor* and *guru*, however, fail to capture what he has in mind. Conventional definitions of the word *mentor*—teacher, adviser, sponsor—also fall short. Levinson identifies four functions of mentoring: role modeling, counseling, acceptance, and possibly friendship. By fulfilling these functions, the mentor supports and facilitates the realization of the young person’s dream.

A mentor is a transitional figure, not a parent or cryptoparent. A mentor is, however, a mixture of parent and peer, and thus represents both. While a mentor is generally older than the protege by half a generation, Levinson contends that someone even older—say, by twenty or even fifty years—may, if sufficiently in touch with his or her own youthful dreams and those of others, still function as a significant mentoring figure.

Levinson believes that the presence of a mentor is vital for sound personality development. He does not, however, address directly the question of mentors and faith development.

FOWLER ON FAITH DEVELOPMENT

For the purposes of my study, a broader understanding of development was called for—one that included the elements of faith, vocational call, and commitment. These dimensions of personality development have been addressed by James W. Fowler, who sees faith as an exceedingly broad and complex reality. While Webster defines *faith* as a noun meaning “something that is believed especially with strong conviction: a system of religious beliefs,” Fowler contends that the word denotes a dimension of personality that continues to develop over the course of a lifetime. Faith, in Fowler’s words, is “an orientation of the total person, a way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives; faith is a person’s way of seeing him- or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose.” Fowler, then, suggests that one’s developing life of faith provides additional possibilities for discovering meaning and purpose in life.

Fowler’s concept of faith can be incorporated easily into Levinson’s developmental theory, especially with reference to the young person’s need to recognize a life dream. The introduction of faith also gives a value-added spiritual dimension to the process of life structuring. The similarities between Fowler and Levinson become apparent when one examines Fowler’s six stages of faith development, representing successively more complex ways of organizing meaning in life.

Fowler suggests that the development of faith begins with a stage called *undifferentiated faith*, which is preconceptual, prelinguistic, and parallels Erikson’s trust vs. mistrust stage of personality development. This first stage of faith development generally gets under way with the development of thought and language.

Intuitive-projective faith, commonly found in children up to age seven, involves images of their parents’ formal religion and of normal family life. The next stage, *mythic-literal faith*, generally occurs in the adolescent years; it gives coherence to family, school, work, peers, media, and, perhaps, formal religious environments.

Fowler’s stages two and three coincide with Levinson’s preadulthood era, and his fourth stage, *individuating-reflective faith*, lines up with Levinson’s early adulthood era. Consequently, both Levinson’s early

adulthood era and Fowler's stage four of faith development have significance for my study.

The individuative-reflective faith stage begins at about age 17 and continues through the early twenties—a period in which people leave home either geographically or emotionally and start to examine their outlook on life. During this stage of faith development, the important task is to construct a personal worldview based on an emerging awareness of oneself.

Fowler suggests that two essential developments take place during stage four: people develop a critical distance from their previous value system, and they develop a new sense of identity. The latter is expressed in an individual's choice of personal and group affiliations and the shape of his or her lifestyle. During this stage, people feel a pull toward a life of deeper reflection and are challenged to think critically about their own life and its meaning.

The fourth stage of faith development can be somewhat frightening and disorienting for an individual who feels cut off from conventional moorings. As Fowler states in *Stages of Faith*, "Whether a person will really make the move to an individuative-reflective stance depends to a critical degree on the character and quality of the ideologically composed group bidding for one's joining."

PARKS ON FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Educator Sharon Parks relates mentoring directly to faith development. She suggests that most young adults have an appropriate dependence different from that prevalent among adolescents or older adults. Young adults are subject to influences that "invite out" the still-emerging self. They also rely on mentors to provide time and space for the expression, confirmation, and fulfillment of that emerging self and its dependency issues.

Young adults experience what has been referred to as "fragile interdependence"—fragile in the sense of being vulnerable while at the same time healthy, vital, and full of promise. Often, young adults have feelings of hope, promise, glimmering possibility, exhilaration, and challenge. At the same time, however, they are vulnerable to feelings of disappointment, failure, exclusion, abandonment, emptiness, and hopelessness.

Like Levinson, Parks views the presence of mentors as critical during early adulthood. Mentors provide assurance in the midst of disorientation, as well as direction toward enrollment in a group—especially one whose ideology resonates with the young adult's dream. In her book *The Critical Years*, Parks builds on Fowler's theory when she states that "it is in the activity of finding and being found by meaning that

we as modern persons come closest to recognizing our participation in the life of faith."

Parks also notes the importance of community in regard to mentoring as a vehicle for faith development: "the mentoring era finds its most important form in a mentoring community." This view is certainly compatible with the process of vocational development. Any community that offers confirmation to young adults meets their yearnings for belonging and communion. "The combination of the emerging truth of the young adult with the example and encouragement of the mentor," Parks writes, "grounded in the experience of an ideologically compatible social group . . . generates the transforming power of the young adult era." Her reference to ideology is consistent with Levinson's notion that young adults must formulate a dream. Young men and women need a realistic ideology (dream) and a solid community at this stage in their psychological development and spiritual journey. Those individuals and institutions seeking to provide support for young adults must offer a vision of self, the world, and God that speaks to the experience and understanding of the young person. Religious communities involved in the process of renewal and refounding would do well to pay heed to this important challenge.

In particular, a mentor is charged with the task of making sense of the young person's experience. He or she performs the crucial function of waking, calling out, developing, and clarifying a young adult's dream. A mentor must see a young person's potential even when that person dare not envision it; only then can the mentor assist in calling that potential to light. The mentoring relationship is a powerful tool for personal and faith development. However, if it is to be supportive rather than destructive, it must take into account the mentor as well as the protégé. Only when the mentor is in touch with his or her own self and vocation and the limits that exist within each can he or she bring passion—the real transforming dynamic—into the mentoring relationship. It is only in realizing this passion, the power of the Spirit, that a mentor can become a spiritual guide as well. The power of the Spirit brings insight and grace, which transform and direct, into the relationship.

Parks affirms the need for mentors to help young adults develop their dreams, their vocations—and suggests further that in the absence of mentors, the culture, which can be bereft of a worthy faith and vision, will serve this role. She reinforces her point with an eloquent quote by Audre Lorde: "Our children cannot dream unless they live, they cannot live unless they are nourished, and who else will feed them the real food without which their dreams will not be different from ours?"

Mentoring relationships can be not only authentic but also countercultural. For authenticity, a mentor needs to be conscious of the truth on which his or her life is based and confident about his or her vocation. The mentor also needs to depend on the presence and action of the Holy Spirit. The countercultural dimension of mentoring is reached only through this reliance on the Spirit and the activity of grace. Only when these elements are present in the mentoring relationship can the dream of the young person be seen as a vocation to be examined and nourished.

A commitment to mentoring results in gifts to both mentor and community. Reflecting with young people on the likelihood of their dreams and vocations often reawakens the dreams and vocations of the mentor and community.

THE MARIST STUDY

Sixty members of the Marist Brothers' contact program took part in my study. They ranged in age from 18 to 22 and were randomly divided into two groups. The "treatment" group participated in a formal process of mentoring; the control group did not.

Mentoring took place over a twelve-month period, with mentors contacting their respective protégés once a month. For the purposes of the study, mentoring was provided in the form of personal contact, exclusively or in combination with other forms of communication (e.g., telephone calls, mail). Each mentor and his protégé arrived at a mutually agreeable schedule for meeting/working sessions.

At the outset, all treatment and control subjects were given a structured interview and asked to complete a survey designed by the investigator. All subjects were also encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of the contact program (e.g., days of recollection, retreats, workshops). At the end of the mentoring process, subjects in both the treatment and control groups participated in another structured interview and completed a second survey. The interviews and surveys were designed to help each individual member of the contact program acknowledge and understand certain elements related to, and essential for, vocational development: personal faith, prayer, reflection, and ability to relate to others. These instruments also assisted each mentor by identifying what needed to be affirmed, clarified, or challenged in his protégé's life.

The interviews and surveys used in this study were based on similar research instruments used by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). They were validated through application of the results of recent studies conducted by CARA and of Sister Eleace King's 1991 investigation of

From a broad social perspective, mentoring has become a lost art in our technological society

vocations among teaching brothers in the United States.

Marist Brothers from the two United States provinces were invited to serve as mentors for this study. Care was taken not to pair off brothers and contacts who had a close relationship or previous difficulties. I met with the mentors regionally to explain their responsibilities and the procedures that were to be carried out in the course of the study. In addition, each group was provided with a brief presentation about Levinson's concept of the dream and the mentor's role in the development of that dream. The mentors were also shown the relationship between the theoretical concepts of Levinson, Fowler, and Parks. Armed with this background information, they were better able to comprehend that in a mentoring relationship, a young man is encouraged to face such issues as identity, intimacy, unresolved fears, and obstacles in his personality. Within this relationship he will also begin to identify his dream/vocation and may better be able to recognize those aspects of his faith/spiritual development that can enhance its realization.

FINDINGS CONFIRM MENTOR'S ROLE

The study's results clearly support the contention that the process of mentoring assists a young man in maintaining interest in entering a religious vocation as he explores that possibility. The subjects who received mentoring had a higher rate of interest in pursuing a vocation to the Marist Brothers' life and ministry than those who did not engage in a formal mentoring program.

A vocation is a calling, an invitation from God. Any response to such a call must be given freely.

Mentoring does not create a vocation; the results of the study, however, suggest that it does support a young man as he considers the realities involved in pursuing one.

As expected, the subjects who received mentoring also demonstrated a more active role in church ministries. For example, many volunteered their time in social action programs, took up leadership roles in the liturgical life of their parishes, or assisted with the Marist Brothers Retreat Program in Esopus, New York.

As mentioned earlier, from its inception, the Marist Brothers' contact program had an ongoing mentoring component. Had that aspect of the program been implemented consistently over the past twenty-two years, my study might not have been necessary. Since it was not, however, this question still remained: Will the inclusion of a mentoring program in the Marist Brothers contact program contribute to a more effective approach to vocation awareness, recruitment, and formation? This study's results provide an unequivocal response of "yes" to that query.

Levinson, Fowler, and Parks have demonstrated clearly that a mentoring relationship is of significant assistance to young men between the ages of 18 and 22 as they negotiate the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood. Their findings provide a challenge to the Marist Brothers—who, in the spirit and charism of their founder, dedicate their lives and ministry to the Christian formation of youth. My study was conducted within the theoretical framework of Levinson, Fowler, and Parks, as well as within the goals and objectives of the Marist Brothers' ministry to youth. Mentoring appears to be not only a desirable process to include in the work of recruitment and formation, but indeed a necessary and vital one.

This investigation examined only the effects of mentoring on the protégé; future research could look at the mentoring relationship from the protégé's point of view and explore its effect on the mentor. Obviously, the relationship has a strong impact on both participants. I speculate that it provides the mentor with a deeper sense of appreciation for his ministry and its implications for his spiritual and personal growth. It could also help restore a sense of confidence in the role of the brother today, since a mentoring relationship is compatible with its nonhierarchical nature.

It is obvious that the time span for this investigation was too short. Nevertheless, it is clear that a

structured mentoring component is an important facet of recruitment and initial formation programs. Future research could more fully appreciate the effects of mentoring if it followed protégés for a period of four years; the findings of such research would be helpful for assessing candidates' success in choosing religious life and/or making the transition to it. A longer and more in-depth study would also go a long way toward monitoring choices made in related areas of church ministry and in the development of a spiritual life. An ongoing mentoring program could also shed some light on the thorny issue of temporary or transitional vocations. The latter might be examined in light of the recent phenomenon of religious orders providing opportunities in lay volunteer or associate programs.

Understandably, mentoring programs would be of great benefit in a number of settings outside the one described in this study. They could be used to help develop lay ministers and leaders and contribute to a host of educational programs and social settings. In the final analysis, we must admit that from a broad social perspective, mentoring has become a lost art in our technological society. It is an art, however, that can be rediscovered. That rediscovery may be more important for the future of religious life than anyone realized just a quarter century ago.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Fowler, J. *Stages of Faith*. New York, New York: Harper & Row, 1981.
- King, E. *Vocations in Communities of Teaching Brothers*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 1991.
- Levinson, D., C. Darrow, E. Klein, M. Levinson, and B. McKee. *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. New York, New York: Knopf, 1978.
- Parks, S. *The Critical Years*. San Francisco, California: Harper & Row, 1986.



Brother Stephen W. Synan, F.M.S., Ph.D., is a member of the Esopus Province of the Marist Brothers. He is currently vice rector at Marist International College in Nairobi, Kenya.

Imagined Spaces Helpful to a Healing

Patricia Chaffee, O.P.

Imagination is a force for transformation. Artists, scientists, psychologists, therapists, and spiritual directors recognize it as the matrix for creation, insight, healing, growth, and prayer.

I would like to describe an experience of the transformative power of imagination, which I define as the human capacity to assimilate, sort, and create images consciously or unconsciously. The focus of the experience was space: open space, inner space, and a particular room designated as sacred space. I will explore each of these spaces and then describe their psychological-spiritual coming together—a process in which, I believe, imagination was pivotal.

The room designated as sacred space was that of my therapist, Rachel. What made this space sacred? That is, what set it apart from other rooms—my office at work, my studio apartment, the living room of a friend's house?

In part, suggestion made it sacred. Scarcely three months into weekly therapy, I clashed with Rachel over the possibility of our belonging to the same choral group. I saw no problem; she saw a major problem. After we argued about it, she said, "I am concerned about the quality of our connection here, in this room. I am afraid that any connection we might have outside this room would jeopardize that connection. I want this to be entirely your space—a safe place, a sacred space."

I made the decision to trust her and held on to the designation "sacred space." Perhaps the nature of the room itself contributed to the sense of sacredness. It was a small room in Rachel's home—probably about twelve feet square, with a window and outside and inside doors. The space was simply furnished with the love seat on which I sat, the chair and low footstool for Rachel, and cupboards on three walls. It tolerated only minimal trappings of business: a telephone, an answering machine, and two small, discreetly placed clocks.

The room was self-contained. There was no waiting room with chairs and magazines to suggest that I was merely "Rachel's 4:30 appointment." There was no receptionist taking cancellations on the phone or chatting with a secretary. Rachel herself gave me my bill—adjusted for my low income and lack of insurance—in an envelope on the first Tuesday of the month. The bill was simply a handwritten list of the dates we had met and the total amount due. The sacredness of the room lay in its simplicity, in its simultaneous connection with ordinary living and separateness from ordinary business.

Thus, the room was a place apart. The connection between Rachel and me in that room quickly became a sacred reality. Within the parameters of therapy, our connection was a meeting of humanly absolute

**Inner space is freedom
from obsession, from
anxiety, from minutiae;
it is an alert, open
receptivity, bearing
no resemblance
whatsoever to
passivity; it allows
images of all kinds
to enter one's
consciousness**

trust with humanly absolute acceptance, nurturing, and reliability.

IMAGINATION'S ESSENTIAL ROLE

What was the role of imagination in this sacred space? First, the firm parameters of the connection focused my attention and imagination. I knew Rachel only as nurturer. Had she not insisted on the inappropriateness of our singing in the same group, had she allowed any association outside our therapeutic connection within a particular place, I would have known her also as other than nurturer. In many ways, this would have been a more realistic, complete knowledge. It would also, however—at least for me—distracted from the focus of therapy.

Within the parameters Rachel set, the words, gestures, and silences that therapy comprised became images of nurture. One particular image that expressed my experience of our connection was similar to a drawing I had seen in literature about refugees: a maternal figure wraps several children in her large, protective arms, embracing them and providing shelter, protection, love. I did not consciously conjure up that image; it came unbidden. In the dynamic of this sacred space, my imagination quickened with other, less articulated images. I experienced our shared words and gestures and silences as a breathing in of both cognitive and affective signals, which were transformed into insights and indistinct feelings.

Without my conscious control, imagination created and recalled images associated with the words or gestures and then rearranged them: fantastic images from my unconscious, images of sight, hearing, smell, touch, and possibly taste as well. At times I could describe a new image; at times I was aware only of a new mental image that was often closer to touch than to any other perception.

Eventually, the moment came in which my experience of nurture shifted from therapist to the mother whose love, for serious and valid reasons, I had not been able to experience. My imagination expressed this moment in an image of Rachel fading to a shadow, with a clear, sharp image of my mother superimposed on the shadow. The transformation was from a feeling of radical isolation to a feeling of radical connectedness.

INNER SPACE DESCRIBED

Within the sacred space enfolding Rachel and me, and allowing imagination to work transformation, was inner space. Inner space is freedom from obsession, from anxiety, from minutiae. It is an alert, open receptivity, bearing no resemblance whatsoever to passivity. It allows images of all kinds to enter one's consciousness. At times the experience is almost as if the image—or perhaps the energy from the image—enters into and is assimilated by one's consciousness. A new reality is created; a connection is made. Into a receptive inner space come images that one wraps in prayer—that is, in one's connection with the Spirit. One sits with an image, a thought, a connection, and lets it unfold.

In my experience of therapy, inner space and the sacred space of Rachel's room opened to each other to create a new reality, like two rivers flowing into each other to form a new one. I am reminded of the day I stood on a promontory at Harpers Ferry, overlooking the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. My experience of open space replicates and blends with my experience of that new reality. The transformative potential of open space embraced by imagination occurs when I am hiking. I suppose that it is similar to, or identical with, the mystical or quasi-mystical experiences described by athletes and artists. I can be walking in a redwood forest; or along a wide, isolated expanse of beach and grassland; or on the ridge of a range of hills. Before me, behind me, all around me is space—filled with trees, brush, trail, stream; or ocean, sand, grasses; or rocks, sagebrush, chaparral. Occasionally deer, hawks, jays, herons, lizards, salamanders appear in the space. Wind, sun, rain, fog, heat, and cold are part of the space, as is the aroma of sage and the

kinesthetic sense of my walking: at times brisk, at times trudging, at times strolling, at times cautious.

As with Rachel's room, what is absent in the experience of open space is as significant as what is present. City, town, and village are absent. There are no buildings in view, no paved roads, no motorized equipment. In the setting of open space, imagination reaches from my inner space to the spirit of the space in which I walk, moves into that spirit, and brings it back into my space. There are no mental perceptual images; there is only the mutual presence of my spirit and the spirit of the external space. And the spirit of the open space comes not so much from generalized space as from each particular piece of the whole that I experience: sea, sage, cliffs, grasses, redwoods, dirt and stones, hawks, jays, sandpipers, wind, sun, fog.

TRANSCENDENT EXPERIENCE RESULTS

The transformation worked by this mutual immersion of inner and outer space leads from the experience of physical limits and physical definitions to the experience of transcendence of time and space, even with the awareness of physical limitedness. It is an experience of the immanence of the transcendent. It is not radical in the sense of being irreversible; the business, anxieties, and minutiae of daily reality eventually return. It is, however, radical in the sense of being irrevocable; the moment, though past, can never be undone, can never not have happened.

Perhaps imagination is the receptor that accepts the spirit of each particular piece of the whole; per-

haps it creates the spirit from my physical perceptions. The transformation does not depend on the mode in which imagination works; it depends on the human capacity to assimilate, sort, and create images and on the power of that process to effect change.

The spiritual/psychological transformation from radical isolation to radical connectedness, and the related transformation from the limitedness of time and space to an experience of temporal and spatial transcendence, have become a foundation for a further transformation in which imagination is again the catalytic agent. The inner transformation is changing my stance toward action and relationship—effecting a movement from self-doubt and fear to a confidence which, though rudimentary, is not tenuous. Imagination, in the guise of memory, conjures up the images associated with the sacred space of therapy and with the open space of my walks. These images and the connectedness they carry bring healing, which in turn makes possible the images that motivate action and deepen trust.



Sister Patricia Chaffee, O.P., is a writer, educator, and lecturer who lives in Racine, Wisconsin.

Applications

*are now being accepted
for immediate admission to*

The Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality

offered by

*The Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development
on the campus of St. John's Seminary
in Greater Boston, Massachusetts*

(see back cover of this issue for information)

Bedrock Elements of Spiritual Growth

Patrick J. McDonald, L.S.W.

Few would argue that today's views of spirituality speak to the notion of development. Metaphors related to spiritual journey, transformation, new life, renewal, and grounding in God all connote internal changes that are deep and genuine, as well as dynamic in nature. Disagreements about the nature of development are usually not over the fact that transformation takes place in a person's spiritual evolution, but over *how* that transformation takes place.

Are the hidden works of God and a person's spiritual development—matters that are unseen—known only to the Source of all transformation? Or does a genuine spiritual development directly influence the psychological processes of the person, manifesting itself in wholeness, resiliency, and admirable life experiences?

Differing opinions concerning the proper locus of spiritual development are not new. Thomas Merton reflected on the matter as follows in his *New Seeds of Contemplation*:

Our vocation is not simply to *be*, but to work together with God in the creation of our own life, our own identity, our own destiny. We are free beings and sons [and daughters] of God. This means that we should not passively exist, but actively participate in His creative freedom, in our own lives, and in the lives of others, by choosing the truth. To put it better, we are even called to

share with God the work of *creating* the truth of our identity.

Merton describes two essential stances in the process of spiritual development: a passive position (being, surrender, reception) and an active position (working, creating, acting). For the purposes of this article, I will refer to these polar stances as surrender (passive) and autonomy (active). After briefly describing them, I will examine their interaction within the individual and reflect on their implications for spiritual growth and development. I hope to shed some light as well on a needless conflict that exists between competing views of spiritual development.

SPIRITUALITY AS DIALOGUE

The term *spirituality* carries a variety of meanings. In this article I define it as an awareness of the depth of, and a quest for the fullness of, a life with God as its source and center. This awareness and quest invite a person to enter ever more deeply into the Mystery of God, as well as to invest more actively in life itself with direction, energy, and meaning. This definition of spirituality implies that spiritual development has a psychological as well as an ontological dimension. An assertion is made that God is actively at work

within the total context of the human experience, thereby touching every dimension of life. In an existential situation, it is probably impossible to separate that which is purely psychological from that which is purely ontological.

Occasionally, someone will ask me, "What should I do in this complex and painful life situation? Should I merely surrender my own desires and let God direct me through a course of action? Or should I organize the internal resources that I have worked so hard to develop and meet these questions head-on as I fight for my integrity?" Those who seek consultation on such matters from me as well as from other advisers usually encounter conflicting views. The more religiously oriented consultants advise surrendering, placing the matter in God's hands, and letting the workings of God's plan come about. They encourage these individuals to rest with inner peace, to "let go and let God" govern the situation.

Advisers who have been schooled in the behavioral sciences tend to emphasize a view of spiritual development that is more autonomous in nature. These mentors encourage their students to assess the complexity of the situation in depth, decide on a course of action, and live with the consequences. Questions about the presence of God in these encounters are usually resolved by stating that God is present in every human experience and therefore is present in this one. One need only look a little more deeply to find God, realizing that God's presence is not always clearly seen.

In spite of the most seasoned wisdom gleaned from a spiritual director, therapist, or consultant, the individual is usually still puzzled by a lingering dilemma: Do I surrender and trust God to solve these matters, or do I proceed with clear-headed autonomy and live with what I create?

I postulate that the either/or dilemma over surrendering or living autonomously is, at best, in a dynamic balance during the changing periods of a person's spiritual development. As one moves through the complicated challenges and rewards of life, one does so with a variety of personal internal resources that influence whether he or she is decisive or hesitant when faced with important choices. One is confronted as well with a clouded awareness of the presence of God.

AN INTERNAL DIALOGUE

This state of affairs presents a challenge to the person interested in growing spiritually: Do I make decisions with the resources I have organized for myself, or do I surrender to what I perceive to be God's will? The essence of spiritual growth lies in this life-

time internal dialogue, with energy moving between the polarities of surrender and autonomy. In his book *Will and Spirit*, Gerald May speaks of the dynamic interaction between these forces in terms of willingness and willfulness:

Willingness implies a surrendering of one's self-separateness, an entering-into, an immersion in the deepest processes of life itself. It is a realization that one is already a part of some ultimate cosmic process and it is a commitment to participation in that process. In contrast, willfulness is the setting of oneself apart from the fundamental essence of life in an attempt to master, direct, control, or otherwise manipulate existence. More simply, willingness is saying yes to the mystery of being alive in each moment. Willfulness is saying no, or perhaps more commonly, "Yes, but . . ."

At a critical time in life, a person surrenders to the largeness of life itself, while hoping against hope. At another time the same person brings to bear upon hard life questions all his or her personal and psychological resources, while hoping for the best.

Just three years before the end of his life, Merton explicated the bittersweet dialogue of a still-maturing spirituality in his book *A Vow of Conversation*:

The voice of God is not clearly heard at every moment; and part of the "work of the cell" is *attention*, so that one may not miss any sound of that voice. What this means, therefore, is not only attention to inner grace but to external reality and to one's self as a completely integrated part of that reality. Hence, this implies also a forgetfulness of one's self as totally apart from outer objects; it demands an integration of one's own life in the stream of natural and human and cultural life of the moment. When we understand how little we listen, how stubborn and gross our hearts are, we realize how important this inner work is. And we see how badly prepared we are to do it.

AUTONOMY VS. SURRENDER

Coming into wholeness in a vital spirituality is never fully accomplished in one's lifetime, because the dialogue between surrender and autonomy is never completely finished. It is the lifetime interaction between the pull of surrender and the drive of autonomy, however, that forms the very bedrock of growth.

Within this view, I wish to explicate ten central processes that constitute the foundation of spiritual growth, as well as some benchmarks of healthy spiritual development. These ten processes by no means describe every aspect of spiritual growth, but they do represent some dimensions of it. Each is uniquely important as a component of the unity they all constitute, like the combined patterns of a patch-

work quilt. My awareness of these dynamic processes comes from my experience of working with people in psychotherapy and spiritual direction. Over the years, I have identified these central, unifying processes in the growth of those whom I consider to be spiritually and psychologically healthy.

Process 1: The consolidation of a beginning authenticity. All people bring to the invitation of spiritual development a degree of authenticity, usually hard-won by responding to the demands of life. God speaks to each person through that individual's inner voice—and, as Merton says, the task of awakening to one's inner voice is central to all growth. In this case, to listen to the voice of God is to listen for the echoes, deep within one's self, of the resources that one can trust and build upon in moving forward with deeper self-possession and love. A close friend of mine refers to this as coming to own one's truth.

A grounding authenticity offers substance and form as one learns to take the risks inherent in all new growth situations. One cannot begin a life journey of any quality without sufficient self-possession to take the risk to start such a journey. If a beginning authenticity cannot be established, no risks are taken, no new voice is heard, and no genuine growth occurs.

Process 2: Developing an openness to surrender. Spiritual growth that is too dependent on an unbalanced authenticity is narrow and even self-defeating. Over the years, I have observed that many people become so convinced of the rightness of their views that they blindly proceed with a course of action that is harmful to others and destructive to themselves. An exaggerated sense of their own autonomy and their unalloyed rightness puts them on a collision course with self-destruction. They refuse to listen to any voice other than their own.

Relying solely on the drive to autonomy, refusing to listen to the deeper voice of God within, and closing off honest dialogue with others have the effect of reducing spiritual growth to a narrow and self-serving psychologism. Surrender to the quiet voice of God within is an essential dynamic of development. A willingness to listen, pray, reevaluate a hard stand, and move into the desert to seek solitude is essential to development.

Process 3: The emergence of self-statements. As a directee or client begins balancing the dynamics of inner growth and development in engaging and creative ways, I always listen for the emergence of self-statements. Sometimes referred to as "I statements," these declarations signal that the processes of growth and development are under way and are

integrating into a wholeness. The individual begins speaking with confidence about personal beliefs and values and about the direction in which he or she is traveling: "I am now at peace with this decision. I know that God has given me these gifts to be used, and I'm going to use them. God is loyal to me and has traveled with me through this difficult time, so I'm really proceeding with confidence now." The absence of such self-statements indicates that the person is still in a passive mode, waiting for answers that are not yet present and for direction that is too externalized.

Process 4: Developing the ability to listen to others. The drive toward autonomy is balanced and tempered through the capacity and willingness to listen to others. As a client grows, I usually see an emerging eagerness to listen to others talk about how they view life, experience growth, and wrestle with personal pain and uncertainty in order to hear the voice of God. Listening not only brings the pleasure of delighting in the uniqueness of others but also creates healthy resonances deep within the listener. An internal "sifting through the experiences" takes place as a person reflects on someone else's life, choosing to remember the decisions that were positive and viable for that individual and discarding those that were hazardous. The listener develops an awareness that all growth takes place through active and appreciative dialogues with friends, relatives, and members of the community. The result of this creative interaction is a deepening openness to life itself and a balancing out of the interplay between self-direction and dependence on others. The voices of others are imaged as the voice of God.

Process 5: Developing a willingness to take risks. The deepening of a genuine spirituality translates into a strength that calls a person to break out of conventional ways of looking at life and take new risks. To opt for a life of service over personal and financial security, to be generous in giving despite a weak financial position, to march in support of an unpopular civil cause, to speak the truth to a supervisor when the risk of retaliation is high—all reflect a deepening autonomy. The nourishment of the autonomous spirit, however, is linked to surrender and prayer. In *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Merton explains the interconnection this way: "We do not go into the desert to escape people, but to learn how to find them; we do not leave them in order to have nothing more to do with them, but to find out the way to do them the most good."

Process 6: Living in the here and now. As the process of growth unfolds in those with whom I work, I wit-

ness their development of a deep appreciation for life as it is lived, moment by moment, experience by experience. As they feel more anchored in their hard-won self-possession, life takes on a new tone and leaves them free to savor life in rich and rewarding ways. Surrender leads to the realization that one need not lament the past or covet the future, for the gift of the moment is the voice of the Creator in one's life right now. Some people say this newfound awareness inspires a feeling of gratitude; others experience a sense of amazement and an ever-deepening capacity to discover God in the ordinary events of daily life. In any case, peacefulness is the reward.

In the book *Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*, Thich Nhat Hanh expresses both the joy and the challenge of living in the here and now as follows:

Every morning, when we wake up, we have twenty-four brand-new hours to live. What a precious gift! We have the capacity to live in a way that these twenty-four hours will bring peace, joy, and happiness to ourselves and to others. Peace is present right here and now, in ourselves and in everything we do and see. The question is whether or not we are in touch with it. We don't have to travel far away to enjoy the blue sky. We don't have to leave our city or even our neighborhood to enjoy the eyes of a beautiful child. Even the air we breathe can be a source of joy. . . . Every breath we take, every step we make, can be filled with peace, joy, and serenity. We need only to be awake, alive in the present moment.

Process 7: Cultivating the ability to laugh at oneself.

Autonomy infers that one is in charge of a great deal, that one's life can be laid out as a plan of action and deliberately executed. Surrender implies that one is in charge of very little, that the only path is to turn over everything to unknown forces. Neither view captures the mystery of life completely. People with a sense of humor have the flexibility to adapt when the best-laid plans fall apart and when the surrender to things bigger than oneself turns out to be an expression of personal fears. The capacity to laugh helps to create a balance in life.

Process 8: Accepting one's own pettiness.

Development within this process declares that perfectionism is a dead issue; one lives with an honest acceptance of all the positive and negative qualities that constitute his or her makeup. One ceases to fear his or her dark side and accepts it—then moves forward with a disciplined life that integrates the dark side in a healthy fashion. The acceptance of one's own foibles and faults clearly invites surrender, asking God to give strength where there is none. The result of this kind of acceptance can be the emergence of com-

passion and love, because when a person takes responsibility for his or her own darkness, he or she can comfortably identify with other people's struggles.

Process 9: Avoiding efforts to change others.

A deep acceptance of the complex and mixed elements of oneself brings about personal realism. The invitation to surrender encourages a person to become aware of his or her own faults rather than those of others. With the gifts that flow from surrender comes a deep realization that God accepts each of us in all our quiriness and that we in turn can ignore the less-than-ideal qualities of others. The energy of autonomy prompts one to invest his or her energy in more worthwhile projects than trying to evangelize others into his or her personal view of life.

Process 10: Learning to live with paradox.

Practical wisdom teaches us that life is never completely in order, and certainly never perfect. Life, in the final analysis, is an unsolvable problem. The developmental task is to learn to live in this climate of uncertainty, knowing that there is a welcome place to take up residence—and to realize that neither total surrender to the unfathomable mysteries that surround us nor the exclusive pursuit of the intense autonomy related to meeting life head on will resolve all our questions. Learning to live with paradox means that at times the only way to find life is to lose it, the only answer to the questions of life is to be open to another's wisdom, and the only way to survive is to exercise hard-won autonomy with great sensitivity.

All these actions come into a creative balance with the awareness that God is present in all the twists, turns, and paradoxes of life. A person is also sustained at special times by being given the opportunity to "see" the tracings of God's writing more clearly. The rest is a matter of patience and prayerfulness.

MINIMIZING THE CONFLICT

I have tried to show in this article that spiritual development is a dynamic process that is never really finished. To define the process of growth as a matter of either totally surrendering to the demands of God or living with unbridled autonomy is to oversimplify a wonderfully complex and rewarding process.

God, hidden and loving, is present in all human processes, guiding, directing, and bringing us to union through the normal everyday events of living. Some of these processes demand surrender and openness; others are invitations to accept and integrate all one's psychological and emotional resources and to use them effectively. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that surrender and autonomy are mutually

exclusive movements in spiritual development. A loving and hidden God invites us to wholeness through the entire story of our lives and is no less present to autonomy than to surrender. I believe that problems in understanding this come from the human tendency to oversimplify the mysterious workings of God in too-easy programs of spiritual growth.

Development is complex and varied—but so is the blooming of a rose, which won't happen any faster if we wish for more sunlight on a cloudy day. In God's good time, the rose will bloom—and in God's good time, the stories of our lives will come to fullness.

RECOMMENDED READING

Hanh, T. *Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*, ed. by A. Kotler. New York, New York: Bantam, 1991.

May, G. *Will and Spirit*. San Francisco, California: Harper & Row, 1982.

Merton, T. *A Vow of Conversation*. New York, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988.

Merton, T. *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New York, New York: New Directions, 1961.



Patrick J. McDonald, M.S.W., A.C.S.W., is a licensed clinical social worker engaged in the practice of individual, marital, and family psychotherapy in Des Moines, Iowa. He was formerly adjunct assistant professor of marriage and family therapy at Drake University.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of publication: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Publication No. 019730
2. Date of Filing: 3-8-96
3. Frequency of Issue: Quarterly
- 3A. No. of issues published annually: 4
- 3B. Annual subscription price: \$24
4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898.
5. Complete mailing address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publishers: 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898.
6. Names and addresses of publisher and editor:
Publisher: Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA

02135-3898; Editor: James J. Gill, S.J., M.D., 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898.

7. Owner: Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898.
8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, other security holders owning or holding 1% or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None
9. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal Income tax purposes has not changed in the preceding 12 months.
10. Extent and nature of circulation:
Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months, and actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date, respectively, are as follows:
A. Total no. of copies printed
(net press run) 10,500

- B. Paid circulation
 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: None
 2. Mail subscriptions: 8,431
- C. Total paid circulation (sum of B1 and B2): 8,431
- D. Free distribution by mail carrier or other means: 250
- E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 8,681
- F. Copies not distributed
 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 1,819
 2. Returns from news agents: None
- G. Total sum of E, F1, and F2 should equal net press run shown in A: 10,500

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
(signed) James J. Gill, S.J., M.D., Editor-in-Chief

Western Influence on Southeast Asian Formation

Mark Fortner, S.C.J., Ph.D.

In their 1991 study of the American Catholic priesthood, Dean R. Hoge and Eugene F. Hemrick make a poignant point about the importance of priestly identity for those already ordained, as well as for those studying for the priesthood, particularly in a time of social change. Notwithstanding the differences between American priests and seminarians and their counterparts in Southeast Asia, the point to which these two researchers allude appears to be clearly transferable. In fact, there is reason to believe that what might be called the "priestly identity-social change equation" may be a matter of even greater import for seminary formation in Southeast Asia than it is in the United States. To quote Hoge and Hemrick, "Priest[s] . . . need to feel certain and secure in their priesthood or they will falter in their ministry. Such a problem is what Erik Erikson called an 'identity crisis,' and it is a potential threat to persons in specialized roles in a time of social change. Education for the priesthood needs to forge strong priestly identity."

With social change in Southeast Asia becoming increasingly more rapid each year, it is important to identify its prime mover. In *The World Revolution of Westernization: The Twentieth Century in Global Perspective*, Theodore Von Laue maintains that social change worldwide is largely driven by Western influence:

For the first time in all human experience the world revolution of Westernization brought together, in inescapably intimate and virtually instant interaction, all the peoples of the world, regardless of their prior cultural evolution or their capacity—or incapacity—for peaceful coexistence. Within a brief time, essentially within a half century, they were thrust into a common harness, against their will, by a small minority called "The West"—the peoples of Western Europe and the descendants of North America.

THE CASE OF INDONESIA

Because it consists of hundreds of different cultures deeply rooted in multiple primordial layers of religious tradition (Animist, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, and Islamic), and because it also has a 350-year history of Western influence from Dutch colonization, Indonesia may be one of the best laboratories in the world for the study of the impact of Western influence on non-Western seminary formation. With one of the largest land masses in the world (encompassing some 13,670 islands) and a population of over 185 million people (the fourth highest in the world, after the United States), Indonesia has over 2,600 major seminarians studying for the priesthood at the present time.

Although Dutch colonization was brought to an end with Indonesia's independence in 1945, Western influence continues to spread in many ways—through the media, through the increasing number of multinational companies doing business in that country, and through the major religious forces of Christianity and Islam, the ideas and practices of which owe their origins to the West.

As Von Laue explains, it is rather ironic that "Westernization is now pressed on by non-Westerners themselves. Culturally neutralized, it has become 'modernization' or simply 'development,' the common goal of all peoples and governments no matter how handicapped in achieving it." Unwittingly, many Indonesians today are caught up in the winds of change—and are discarding many of their most prized cultural treasures of language, literature, and tradition.

INVERSELY RELATED TO SELF-ESTEEM

I recently completed a study of the impact of Western influence and status on the self-esteem of three groups of Indonesian Catholic seminarians: the Javanese, the Floresnese, and the Minahasans. Among the conclusions of the study, two are especially relevant to the topic of this article. The first (needing further verification) is that Western influence is inversely related to self-esteem. In other words, as the impact of Western influence increases in this population, self-esteem decreases.

This seems to fit with Von Laue's thesis that Western influence (meaning all the past and present cultural, political, religious, and socioeconomic factors from Europe and North America that determine and facilitate ways of thinking, feeling, and acting consonant with European and North American culture) is generally judged negatively in many non-Western cultures. Although the seminarians in my study acknowledged some positive benefits of Westernization in the areas of practical know-how, technology, and education, they judged that overall, the disadvantages of Western influence outweigh its advantages.

REGRETFUL ACCEPTANCE OF CHANGE

In an essay entitled "Costing Social Change," George Appell, who has conducted extensive research in Indonesia, claims that development, modernization, and social change in Indonesia have regrettably been accepted as "hallowed, unchallenged goals." In stark terms, Appell reminds us that "every act of development or modernization necessarily involves an act of destruction." Thomas Moore, in his best-seller *Care of the Soul*, confirms this analysis: "We have been seduced into the myth of progress so that at the

social level we assume that we are more intelligent and more developed than our ancestors . . . [and] we defend ourselves from our primitive nature by looking down on less developed cultures."

Using psychological language, Appell spells out clearly what is at stake. He maintains that "when a population undergoes major changes in its social space, its socio-economic structure, or its assumptions about the world, it experiences the same grief as when a loved one dies, or what may be called 'social bereavement.'" If this is not worked through, he claims, "the population will fail to reintegrate, losing its capacity to cope and becoming apathetic, depressed, or angry." Unfortunately, as any attentive observer will notice, these negative symptoms are already present in many of the cities and villages of Indonesia.

The second conclusion of my study that is relevant to the theme of this article is that the Javanese have a somewhat higher self-esteem than the Floresnese and the Minahasans. This may be because the Javanese have the most developed and maintained culture of the three groups. This seems to agree with the Indonesian anthropologist Koentjaraningrat's hypothesis, as delineated in his book *Javanese Culture*, that those cultures with live and deep cultural roots appear to be more resistant to, and better able to withstand, the negative consequences of Western influence—and also seem better able to discern and utilize its positive benefits in a wholesome and integrative fashion.

GUIDELINES NEEDED URGENTLY

Given the inevitable continued spread of Western influence in Southeast Asia, and in Indonesia in particular, it is critical to develop effective guidelines for dealing with related problems in seminary formation. Seminary formation personnel can begin addressing this need in two ways. First, they can encourage seminarians to increase their awareness of the importance of possessing a strong priestly identity. This can be done through focused readings, discussion, prayer, and the positive modeling of priests, both inside and outside the seminary. Merely providing a course on the sacrament of the priesthood is not sufficient.

The issue of priestly identity seems to be especially important because of the changes in the status and tasks of priests; as Hoge and Hemrick observe, "What was formerly clear . . . became less clear after the Council." Because status is a particularly high cultural ideal in Indonesia, formation personnel need to be alert and sensitive to the relationship of priestly identity to status.

Moreover, because a confident sense of one's priestly identity and high self-esteem appear to be closely related, special attention may need to be given to the latter through self-esteem workshops for seminarians and, when needed, individual therapy. Research has provided abundant proof that self-esteem affects one's physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being, which in turn greatly influences the amount of control one has over outcomes (e.g., studies or apostolic work). This is shown not merely in terms of one's ultimate success or failure in any given enterprise but also in terms of the amount of effort one expends on that undertaking and the quality of one's achievement. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to put less effort into their endeavors and to be less concerned about quality. Obviously, this has enormous consequences, especially when the individuals involved are future leaders of the church.

CULTURAL STUDIES VITAL

The second way seminary personnel can begin to address the issue of Western influence is by encouraging their seminarians to study their own culture and other cultures within their own country, as well as Western culture. Certainly, entering into an in-depth study of their own culture would not only enhance the seminarians' self-esteem but also better equip them to understand other cultures. Just as the dialogue between two people is enhanced when each possesses a certain degree of self-knowledge and self-esteem, one is better equipped to enter into another culture when one both knows and esteems one's own culture.

Similarly, there is an important reason for the suggestion that seminarians in Southeast Asia study other cultures within their own country. The complaint is often heard that many indigenous clergy experience great difficulty working with people from other tribal groups within their own country. This problem is widespread in Southeast Asia, where the side-by-side existence of numerous cultures is the norm rather than the exception. Cross-cultural studies are thus clearly indicated. This may seem strange to those who generally think of Westerners, not non-Westerners, as the ones needing increased cross-cultural awareness. It is now time to realize that both need it.

Finally, a study of Western culture is also indicated to equip these future church leaders with the capacity to critically assess Western values and to take an intelligent and prudent stand toward them. As many Indonesian seminary personnel have openly confessed to me, their seminarians are naive about the ramifications of Western influence and often take

either an overly positive or overly negative view of it. Certainly, as more and more of these seminarians master Western languages (e.g., English, German, French)—an endeavor that should be continually encouraged—they will begin to develop a more objective understanding of Western culture.

FORMATION AT CROSSROADS

Many seminary formation personnel in Southeast Asia are beginning to realize that their ministry may be at an important crossroads as the twentieth century draws to a close. Although grateful for their rather large number of seminarians in Indonesia and other places, they are already asking the question, How strong are these vocations? Concern is growing as more and more departures from the priesthood are reported, and as incongruent or otherwise neurotic behaviors that seriously impede the proper functioning of many of the indigenous clergy are brought to light. Moreover, as Western influence continues to undermine Southeast Asian cultures, many are starting to wonder how long it will be before vocations from those cultures begin to dwindle.

It is critically important that the study of the impact of Western influence on seminary formation in Southeast Asia, and particularly in Indonesia, be continued and given top priority by those responsible for the formation of priestly candidates in the region.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Appell, G. "Costing Social Change." In M. Dove (ed.), *The Real and Imagined Role of Culture in Development: Case Studies from Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988.
- Hoge, D., and E. Hemrick. *A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years*. Washington, D.C.: Seminary Department of the National Education Association, 1991.
- Koentjaraningrat. *Javanese Culture*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Von Laue, T. *The World Revolution of Westernization: The Twentieth Century in Global Perspective*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.



Father Mark Fortner, S.C.J., Ph.D., a member of the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, is involved in seminary formation ministry in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

A Response to Catastrophe

Reverend William B. Ross, S.T.L.

At 9:04 a.m. on April 19, 1995, three days after Easter, a massive bomb was detonated in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City.

The outpouring of help after this tragic event was magnificent. One response that continues to this date is the provision by mental health professionals of counseling, both voluntary and funded. Appropriately, this help was first offered to the families of the victims and those immediately involved with the rescue efforts.

The effects of the blast extend well beyond the obvious populations. I fear that the available help will not be utilized to the extent needed, because affected individuals often do not connect their problems with the trauma of such an event or recognize their need for counseling.

One subtle feature of the reluctance to get such help is related to the fact that counseling may be offered as a solution to a medical problem rather than a human problem. People thus have to admit to being sick in order to reach out, and many who could profit from the available help do not identify themselves as being sick. They feel that they are handling the trauma quite well on their own and need no medical attention. Even many severely stressed family members and rescue workers, who are provided

such professional services at no cost, are not requesting them.

People throughout Oklahoma City and the state of Oklahoma, as well as throughout the nation, have been affected by the bombing in profound ways that are not readily detected. Internalized trauma often takes much time to manifest itself. Also, much unexpressed stress manifests itself in displaced anger, depression, and acts of carelessness that lead to accidents.

By practicing self-help and by helping each other through sharing and listening, we can help ourselves deal with and grow from this situation. The trauma of the bombing is basically a human problem, not a medical one. We must seek medical attention by all means if indicated, but let us not neglect the power of prayer and sharing.

I propose a model for processing the individual human response to this tragic event—not only as an important step in recovery but also as a way to “turn all things to good for those who believe.” The model can of course be utilized in a wide variety of situations and in church life. In describing the model, I use the bombing incident to dramatize the need to process one’s response to any traumatic event through the steps of the process, thereby dealing with the following elements:

- Perception of reality
- Making of meaning
- Feelings
- Wants and desires in consequence
- Urge to act
- Decision to act or not
- Obstacles to action
- Evaluation of one's responses
- Theological reflection

While there is a logical sequence to this list of elements, the processing of them will not be linear or orderly. In the service of clarity, however, I will discuss them in the order listed. Whether one is processing one's own response through reflection, or possibly through journal keeping, or by talking or listening to a friend, all these elements are important.

PERCEPTION OF REALITY

It is through our five senses that we take in extramental events. People remember what they physically felt (e.g., shaking, tremor), heard, saw, and in some cases smelled at 9:04 a.m. on April 19. Of course, people in the same place at the same time may have very different perceptions of the same event, so we must not assume that one perception is true for all.

All good storytellers know that the ability to recover and recount the specific details of an experience makes for an interesting story. Also, recalling and relating the specific internal and external experiences of an event are helpful for catharsis or identifying learning. If we neglect the recovery of perceptual reality, we begin to reconstruct our experience on the basis of our fantasies regarding how we should have felt and acted, not the facts.

MAKING OF MEANING

The meanings a group of people make from an experience come out of the group's whole history—political, economic, cultural, and religious. An individual's meaning making is modified by his or her family and personal history. The psychology books call this element of the process "attribution of meaning."

For many, the first guess about the Oklahoma City terrorists was that they would prove to be Islamic. Some profound rethinking of such ideas is required when the accused turns out to be an individual with the background of a Timothy McVeigh. Also, all are faced with the realization that no one anywhere is absolutely safe from such acts of violence.

Our reactions to events are unintelligible even to ourselves if we do not recognize the meaning making involved in our reactions. Sometimes the meanings we give to our experiences are so deeply rooted and automatic that only with difficulty can we see how another might view things differently. The terrible fact is that some people think a terrorist act like the Oklahoma City bombing was precisely what was needed to strike back at an oppressive government. The individuals who make such meanings applaud the efficiency and effectiveness of the bombing. They are not sad about it; they are glad.

FEELINGS SHOW INVOLVEMENT

If we have no feeling response to an experienced event, then we probably have no personal involvement in that event. For instance, if you care nothing about football, the final score of the Super Bowl will not excite you in any way.

In the case of the Oklahoma City bombing, geography, personal knowledge of the building and its functions, and personal acquaintanceship with the victims and survivors all contribute to the intensity of many people's feelings about the incident.

The feelings a person has in response to an experience always make sense if we appreciate the operative processes of perception of reality and making of meaning. Our ability to be clearly aware of our internal responses helps us to understand ourselves. Our ability to enter into another's world to appreciate another's perhaps different perception, making of meaning, and feelings is what we call empathy. Through empathy we communicate warm understanding, because we have truly entered into another's world of experience.

When someone responds to us with empathetic listening, we often shed a tear of relief that someone understands. The individual thus heard may find that even very negative feelings and unworthy thoughts are redeemed by the acceptance of the other. This healing acceptance leads one to conclude, I am not crazy; I am not alone in my thoughts and feelings; I am not terrible for thinking and feeling as I do.

It should be noted that some people have a hard time being aware of, identifying, or acknowledging their feelings. Often, when asked about their feelings, such individuals will respond by expressing *thoughts* in "feeling" language. For example, their response to the question "What did you feel when you saw the picture of the fireman with the dying child in his arms?" might be, "I feel that the persons responsible for this are heartless monsters." This response conveys an understandable thought—but a

thought, not a feeling. Some therapists, in order to elicit a feeling response to such a question, simplify the rich vocabulary of emotions to the absolute basics of *mad*, *sad*, and *glad*.

WANTS AND DESIRES IN CONSEQUENCE

Having processed the response to an event with data received through the senses, reflected on it with our intellect, and recognized our emotional reaction, we are led to want to do something about the situation if the emotional reaction is strong enough. If there is no true emotional investment, we typically are not energized to do anything about the experience. If the energy is there, however, our thoughts and feelings point us in the direction of some action we might take. It must be recognized that sometimes the emotional reaction is so strong as to render us paralyzed, which has its own consequences.

DECISION TO ACT OR NOT

It is certainly a blessing to have the opportunity to act. Judging ourselves powerless leads to painful feelings of guilt and inadequacy.

When we decide to use our energy to act in some way, we enter the realm of morality. Up to this point we may talk about positive and negative thoughts and feelings, but there really is not a question regarding sin or virtue, other than the virtue of honesty or the sin of avoidance, denial, and negligence of our own internal processes.

People who found some way to act in response to the bombing felt much better, and the outpouring of help and generosity in Oklahoma City, as President Clinton said, "set a new standard of community response" for the nation and the world.

People who found no opportunity to respond or who were restrained by circumstances from responding had quite different feelings about themselves and the situation. This leads to the consideration of other elements—namely, obstacles to action.

OBSTACLES TO ACTION

Sometimes circumstances and lack of opportunity prevent one from taking any action. This is understandable and can be excused by the individual. However, if the failure to respond was due to some fear, preoccupation with self, or failure to get involved, one may feel the pain of appropriate remorse. Sin of omission is a reality—but, thankfully, it has a remedy.

**Reflecting on our
experience within the
frame of the gift of faith
brings us treasure that
should not be left
buried and useless in
the field of life; it has
been purchased at
such a high price**

EVALUATION OF ONE'S RESPONSES

Part of processing our experiences is assessing how we feel about all our thoughts, feelings, and actions in response to those experiences. Another part is judging the accuracy of our perceptions, evaluating the depth and validity of our individual making of meaning, recognizing the unredeemed sources of some of our negative feelings and thoughts, and examining our conscience about the appropriateness of our response and what may have gotten in the way of our doing better. Such evaluation, although sometimes painful, provides an opportunity to grow, to learn, and to open oneself to the graced activity of God in one's life.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

All this processing is a healthy exercise in becoming more human—becoming more the man or woman God would like each of us to become. As we enter more fully into such human experiences, the stories and events we read in Holy Scripture and celebrate in our liturgies take on ever more profound meanings. Those who participate in celebration of the Eucharist on a weekly basis have both the opportunity and the prompting to reflect on the changing circumstances of life within the context of the eternal mysteries of God's love for us, as manifested in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The readings of Holy Scripture for the Sundays following Easter and the bombing took on special

meaning for residents of the Oklahoma City area in 1995. I offer some examples.

On April 23, 1995—four days after the bombing and the Second Sunday of Easter, filled with doubt and confusion—we heard the Risen Lord speak to doubting Thomases throughout the ages: “Peace be with you. Take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Do not persist in your unbelief, but believe.” Those who responded with human compassion and caring or were confronted with the generosity of others could say, “I don’t need to place my fingers and hands into the wounds, my Lord and my God! I have seen with my own eyes the Risen Lord, bearing the wounds of humanity.”

The second reading that Sunday began with the greeting, “I, John your brother, who share with you the distress and kingly reign and the endurance we have in Jesus. . . .” In the first reading that day, we had heard that in the early church, “the people carried the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mattresses, so that when Peter passed by at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them.”

The days of frantic rescue efforts gradually gave way to the grim and determined efforts to return the bodies of the dead to their families for burial. We had ten days to reflect on and wonder about what to do with our world badly tilted, if not turned upside down. When we returned for the liturgy of the Third Sunday of Easter, we found that the disciples of the Lord had been in a similar limbo. While they had fleeting experiences of the Risen Lord, their expectations for the victory of the political Messiah were dashed. What did they do? Exactly what we could do—namely, pick up on life, following an old Quaker axiom: “Do the next thing.” They went fishing because that was the work they knew how to do. Jesus blessed this ordinary response by preparing a shore breakfast for them, but not before telling them to harvest a great multitude of fish.

During the two and a half weeks following the Oklahoma City blast, we learned more and more about how such a bomb could be, and indeed had been, constructed with easily purchased fertilizer and ordinary diesel oil. The realization came that if such things can happen here in the Heartland of our country, then no one is safe from acts of terrorism. On the

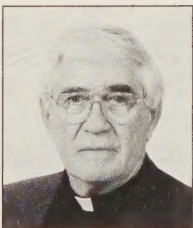
Fourth Sunday of Easter, we gathered to pray—to do our “worship work,” our liturgy—and found comfort in the words of Jesus: “My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one shall snatch them out of my hand.”

As the weeks of adjustment went on, and as we came together to support each other and reflect on God’s word at mass, we discovered a deeper, more profound awareness of the plan of salvation that Jesus announced. This is theological reflection, this reflecting on human events in the faith-filled context of Immanuel: With us is God.

Reflecting on our experience within the frame of the gift of faith brings us treasure that should not be left buried and useless in the field of life. It has been purchased at such a high price. The process I suggest as a way of harvesting this somewhat buried treasure can be formulated as a series of questions to answer—questions that require awareness, reflection, and sharing.

- What did you sense, see, hear, feel, smell, taste?
- What meaning did it have for you immediately? Later?
- What did you feel?
- What did you do?
- What do you now think and feel about what you experienced, thought, felt, and did?
- What has this to do with your spiritual life?

There is an old saying, “Experience is the best teacher.” But experience teaches us nothing if we do not reflect on it. We can reflect better if we have a process for doing so. We can help others reflect on their experiences by being present to them and questioning them gently as they tell their stories and discover how they fit into God’s story.



Father William B. Ross, S.T.L., is pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Purcell, Oklahoma. He was formerly the director of family life for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Senior Laypersons Enrich a Rectory

Like most middle-sized parishes (approximately 900 families, 4,500 parishioners), St. Andrew's Parish in Saline, Michigan, had one priest, a paid lay ministry staff, and many volunteers from 1989 to 1993. Of the lay staff, three were retirees who worked part-time. Two of them, a married couple, lived in the rectory.

The decision to employ senior citizens grew out of the belief that qualified elders have enormous talents and gifts to share. From the world of work, they bring important skills useful for creating programs and running a parish. From their own life experience as long-time practicing Catholics, they bring perspective and insight about an evolving church that has undergone many changes since the Second Vatican Council.

Although many congregations welcome the services of older parishioners as volunteers, having seniors in paid staff positions is important. It provides them with status, allows them direct entrée into the decision-making process of the parish, and places them in a public role through which they can model successful aging.

GETTING THE RIGHT SENIORS

St. Andrew's Parish was fortunate in that the need for additional staff and the availability of appropriate persons coincided. The story of the married couple is particularly striking. In their sixties when they came to the rectory, having raised nine children, they had tried retirement and found it boring. Always active members of the church, they desired some involvement that would give their life meaning and zest.

Initially, the husband assisted in administration, the wife in housekeeping, and both in an extensive religious education program, through which they became grandparent figures to many children. Their job descriptions changed, however, as new parochial needs emerged and their individual and mutual ministry interests developed. Both increasingly involved themselves in social concerns and outreach to the

poor. Eventually, they gave up their work in religious education to establish an important ministry to seniors within the parish and in a neighboring nursing home.

PARISH RESPONSE POSITIVE

This couple had a high degree of credibility. Professionally competent, they were also excellent at interpersonal relations. Younger staff members accepted and respected them. Parishioners in the next generation down from them often sought their advice. Peers of these seniors, as well as parishioners who were older, saw them as champions of people in later maturity and as living proof that they themselves could contribute.

The only serious problem was an occasional "energy crisis." Life in a busy Catholic parish is hectic. Many older people can work at the same intensity as younger people but need to work for shorter periods of time. After the couple's third year on staff, more rest days were added to their schedule to address this reality.

The ample size of the rectory made it possible for this couple to live on site several days each week while working in the parish. At other times, they lived some miles away, at their own home on Lake Huron, which provided them with rest and refreshment. When in Saline, they greatly enjoyed the communal existence in the rectory. The couple's presence proved to be a wonderful advantage to the pastor, affording him a less solitary, more family-type existence than he otherwise would have had. When all were in residence, meals were taken in common, and morning and evening prayers from the Liturgy of the Hours were recited together. Conversations were lively, and laughter was a vibrant part of every day. Clearly, the arrangement was positive for all concerned.

—**Reverend Roger L. Prokop, Ph.D.**
Ann Arbor, Michigan